

# *MATANEL FOUNDATION*

## *ACTIVITY REPORT*

**Program:** The School for Contemporary-Traditional Arts - Kulna, yeruham  
**Year:** 2024-2025

Please present your activity report according to the following lines. The whole rapport will not exceed 2 or 3 pages (as word document).

**Name of the Program:** The Matanel Foundation Arts Program

**Year of activity:** 2024-2025

**Name of the report's writer:** Tal Barsheshet & [Sivan Hadad](#)

**Function of the report's writer:** Tal - Development Manager, Sivan - School Director.

**Mail:** [talb@kulna.org.il](mailto:talb@kulna.org.il), [college@kulna.org.il](mailto:college@kulna.org.il)

Phones: +972 - 526543652 Tal

+972 546545895 Sivan

**Website / Facebook address of the organization:**

[https://www.facebook.com/kulna.ac?locale=he\\_IL](https://www.facebook.com/kulna.ac?locale=he_IL)

<https://kulna.org.il/%D7%91%D7%99%D7%AA-%D7%A1%D7%A4%D7%A8/>

**Number of active participants in the program:** 24 Art track

**Estimated number of impacted participants:** 1200

**Give the actually state of the program (where the program stands at the date of the activity report, no more than ten lines):**

This year, the program continued to establish itself as a leading and unique initiative in the field of traditional crafts. Changes were made in the teaching staff, and the program's vision was refined, including: positioning the track as groundbreaking in its field; encouraging original, tradition-based creation; and making optimal use of Kulna's spaces to suit the program's teaching methods.

Currently, the students are on summer break, while the school's management is in the midst of recruitment for the upcoming academic year, with seven first-year students already registered for 2025–2026.

In the upcoming year, for the first time, students will have the option to continue into a third year, which will serve as a “creative laboratory” and allow each student to deepen her work in her chosen craft.

This year, we also produced, for the first time, an art catalog for 2023–2024, featuring the students' creations in both Hebrew and English. This is part of positioning the school as a high-level academic, cultural, and artistic institution. The catalog will be distributed to cultural figures, journalists, and art institutions.

**The main achievements during the last year of activity (main achievements, number of events, number of participants, etc.):**

### **Main Achievements During the Past Year**

The school operated at full capacity despite the challenges posed by the war that began in October 2023 and continued thereafter.

One notable project was the restoration of the ceremonial flags of Kibbutz Be'eri. The flags were damaged at the outbreak of the October 7 war, and through a joint initiative with students, alumni, and women from the surrounding area, we repaired and preserved them so they could be returned to use.

Additional highlights included:

- Social evenings for the school's students
- Community events with Yeruham residents
- Staff days to strengthen connections among teachers and foster a productive school environment
- Public art courses, including basketry and weaving workshops, with 20 participants
- Collaborations with local schools and kindergartens – weekly meetings in Yeruham on the topic of traditional crafts
- Community Shabbat events centered on the tradition of *Shirat HaBaqashot* – four events in Yeruham, each with over 100 participants
- Mid-year and end-of-year exhibitions open to the public – the end-of-year exhibition ran for about a week and drew over 400 visitors
- Creative Laboratory for the public – inviting community members to take part in joint creative sessions led by students

### **The evaluation (methodology, results, comparisons with the precedent year, conclusions for the future...):**

This year reinforced our understanding of the importance of having a permanent, professional, and engaged teaching staff that supports the program's ongoing development and leads it in line with its vision, particularly during a challenging period of ongoing war.

We developed collaborations with local artists – students learn from Bedouin women who have preserved traditional craft techniques and go on field trips in the region, including Wadi Arifah, Rahma, and other sites.

Submission to the Ministry of Culture – Schools Regulation: Over the past two years, the school has undergone evaluation as part of this regulation, and we have worked

during this time to meet its criteria. We are now able to apply for Ministry of Culture support and hope to receive a positive response.

In the coming year: further development of the third-year program as part of consolidating the track, building suitable teaching spaces, and strengthening the connections between the program's faculty in a productive working environment.

### **Provisional guidelines for the advancement of the program in the next year:**

We will expand regional and international collaborations with artists and artisans in traditional crafts. Efforts to preserve heritage crafts will deepen through master workshops with leading experts in the field.

We will strengthen our ties to the Yeruham community, continue partnerships with local educational frameworks, and host meaningful encounters with women engaged in traditional crafts from the Bedouin community and surrounding towns.

### **Testimonials:**

#### **Adva Moyal**

One of the most special aspects of studying at Kulna is the richness that emerges from traditional crafts. Beyond technique and aesthetics, the process itself teaches patience, attentiveness, slowing down, dedication, and a sense of connection—to myself, to the group, and to tradition. Learning through observation and hands-on practice, while listening to the material itself, has opened a new, more conscious way for me to see and experience the world, and has inspired me to change how I teach.

The program gives space for intuitive, exploratory, and raw creation, enabling freedom and play. Learning local crafts passed down from generation to generation is deeply moving and empowering. It creates a sense of mission—to preserve disappearing knowledge, and to value meticulous, attentive handmade work.

The dialogue between tradition and contemporary expression adds depth to the creative process and final work, revealing meaning that touches on something greater than ourselves—a truth about the essence of life.

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#### **Ella Polak**

Kulna is a school for traditional handcrafts that nurtures men and women with a deep curiosity to explore their roots, preserve the past, and see potential in everything. Every craft lesson comes with a story—personal stories from the teachers themselves and folk tales from the craft's tradition.

The combination of tradition and modernity excites me. It's inspiring to see painstaking handwork recognized as art.

During the war, working with my hands truly saved me. I'm so grateful that life led me here.

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#### **Shay Lee**

This was my second year in the Matanel crafts track—a year filled with learning and

challenges. I deepened my work in weaving, ceramics, basketry, and felting. I had the opportunity to exhibit in two shows, immersing myself in the profound experience of working with materials and expressing my inner world through them. I worked with local materials—earth from Lake Yeruham, stones from the nearby mountain, and plenty of wool.

The guidance of our extraordinary teachers showed me how art takes shape: the rhythm of the studio, how to engage with materials, and how to discover what I want to express through them. This guidance was essential—I never felt alone in my creative process.

This year, I felt myself standing between two worlds: the world of the past and tradition, connecting me to generations before me, and the world of the present—shaped by reality, technology, and individualism. It is a fascinating and deeply enriching place to stand.