

Vermonters for Justice in Palestine Sponsored Art Projects

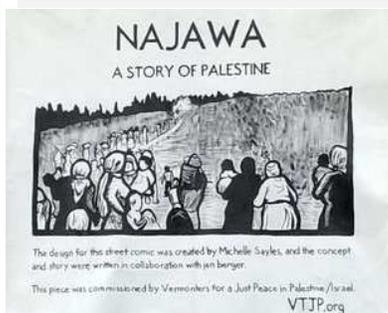
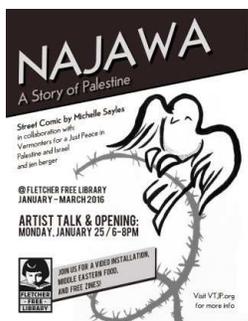
NAJAWA - A Story of Palestine

VTJP has been proud to sponsor a 'Street Comic' by Vermont artist Michelle Sayles (<https://mikasa423.wordpress.com/>) in collaboration with Jen Berger. The artwork consists of a series of illustrated and annotated panels that were installed on the side of a building that houses an artists' cooperative on Pine Street in Burlington, VT.



The Art Hop - weekend of September 11-13, 2015 - included this powerful 'comic strip' installation. A series of nine panels tells one woman's story of military occupation and oppression over 8 decades. The Ben & Jerry's 'free' ice cream truck was located across the street from the 'comic strip' art installation. Many people were visibly moved by the art installation and the story it tells. The South End Art Hop attracts over 30,000 visitors to artists' studios and local businesses that become exhibition spaces.

This project is available for loan. If you have a suitable venue to display the 9 panels (each 60 inches wide by 48 inches high) please contact the coordinating artist Michelle Sales (msaylesart@gmail.com) or [VTJP](http://VTJP.org).



Slideshow: <http://vtjp.org/icecream/ArtHop.pps>
Video of Artwork with Artist's Narration:
<https://vimeo.com/salaamshalomvtjp/najawa-a-story-of-palestine>
Video of Installation:
<http://vtjp.org/NajawaPanorama.wmv>

'Street Comic' exhibit at Fletcher Free Library, Burlington, VT. The work was displayed above the main area of the library from January to March 2016. The Opening was on January 25th, attended by an enthusiastic crowd that gave a standing ovation to the Artist's talk in which she explained her motivation and extensive research for the project.



Mahmoud Darwish Poem "Think of Others" - Interpretive Panels

At the 2015 Burlington ArtHop a collaborative project (coordinated by Burlington artist and activist Michelle Sayles) was exhibited at the 2016 ArtHop. The work consists of a series of canvas panels, each inspired by one of the seven couplets of the poem *Think of Others* by the late Palestinian poet **Mahmoud Darwish**. The participating artists were: Delia Robinson, Jen Berger, Betsy Kelly, Marita Canedo, Robert W. Brunell, Michelle Sayles and Greg Giordano



Mahmoud Darwish was one of the world's pre-eminent poets. He published more than 30 volumes of poetry and eight works of prose. His public readings were major cultural events, and many of his poems were set to music.

He was a son of Palestine, and was recognized internationally as its national poet. His work is revered by millions of Palestinians in Israel, the occupied territories, and in the Palestinian Diaspora. He was born in the village of al-Birwa, in the western Galilee, in 1941, and died in 2008. Although identified with the land and indigenous people of Palestine, Darwish, who lived most of his adult life in exile, described himself as a man of both Palestinian Jewish and Arab cultures.

When a just peace and reconciliation comes to Israel-Palestine, "the Jew will not be ashamed to find an Arab element in himself, and the Arab will not be ashamed to declare that he incorporates Jewish elements," he wrote. The American poet and songwriter Naomi Shihab Nye, when commenting on Darwish's work for the collection "Unfortunately It Was Paradise", wrote: "[T]he style here is quintessential Darwish - lyrical, imagistic, plaintive, haunting, always passionate, and elegant - and never anything less than free - what he would dream for all his people."

This project is available for loan. If you have a suitable venue to display the 10 panels (each 40 inches wide by 72 inches high) please contact the coordinating artist (Michelle Sales (msaylesart@gmail.com) or VTJP (vtjp@vtjp.org)).



Other Showings:

- 2016 - ONE Arts Center, (Burlington, VT)
- April 2017 - Burlington (Vermont) High School - May 2017
- Montpelier (Vermont) High School

Think of Others

As you prepare your breakfast, think of others (*do not forget the pigeon's food*).

As you wage your wars, think of others (*do not forget those who seek peace*).

As you pay your water bill, think of others (*those who are nursed by clouds*).

As you return home, to your home, think of others (*do not forget the people of the camps*).

As you sleep and count the stars, think of others (*those who have nowhere to sleep*).

As you express yourself in metaphor, think of others (*those who have lost the right to speak*).

As you think of others far away, think of yourself (*say: If only I were a candle in the dark*).

