

Mayor Jim Watson
Deputy City Manager Steve Kanellakos
Ottawa City Hall
100 Laurier Ave W
Ottawa, ON K1P 1J1

Dear Mayor Jim Watson and Deputy City Manager Steve Kanellakos,

As concerned Canadians, we would like to express our support for the stand you have taken with regards to the exhibition *Invisible* that is currently on view at Karsh-Masson Gallery in Ottawa. We are elated that you chose to uphold the principles of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and of free expression.

As you are aware, Rehab Nazzal's submission to the Karsh-Masson Gallery, that included video, photography and sound work, was selected by an independent jury of professional artists. As you are also aware, both the Israeli ambassador to Canada and the Jewish Federation of Ottawa and its advocacy agent, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), issued a statement calling for the removal of the exhibition shortly after it opened.

For many years we have been witnessing the attempts at censorship of cultural, political and social initiatives that are critical of the state of Israel. These include shutting down social and political events, student expulsions, faculty firings, threats and harassment of individuals and organizations. These attempts have alarmingly increased and taken more insidious forms as the conditions on the ground for Palestinians have worsened and as more Canadians as well as others around the world who value justice and freedom have raised their voices to bring an end to the illegal occupation of the West Bank, the siege on Gaza, and to stop the apartheid practices by Israel.

In Canada, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), was formed through amalgamation of several organizations into one, to act as the advocacy arm of the Jewish Federations of Canada-United Israel Appeal. This move has been widely criticized within Canadian Jewish communities as CIJA ties Jewish community organizations to pro-Israel lobbying and to the state of Israel. This is to create a climate of silence around Israel's ongoing and brutal occupation of Palestine and oppression of Palestinians. The gap between the facts on the ground in Palestine, and the Israeli lobby's fantastical fabrications grows wider and wider as a result. This dangerous distortion of the facts continues to be the dominant representation in Canadian mainstream media that not only fail to represent Palestinian realities, but also consistently ignore critical voices even inside Israel and in Canada.

The attempt to censor the work of Rehab Nazzal comes at a particularly sensitive time as the Israeli lobby has stepped up its specific and coordinated activities in Canada. This reactionary move is grounded in specious lies about the work on view at Karsh-Masson Gallery as well as the realities on the ground in Palestine. Nazzal's work has been targeted precisely because it bridges the gap left by the Israeli barrage of dis-information.

Nazzal's *Frames from the Negev Prison (2012-2014)* highlights one of the many prisons and detention camps located inside the state of Israel. The Negev prison holds hundreds of

Palestinian political prisoners, mostly without access to trial. It is a fact that 40% of Palestinian men in the West Bank have spent time in Israeli detention, and there are now over 5200 Palestinians in total held as political prisoners in Israeli jails. *Bil'in (2010)* is Nazzal's artistic expression of her experience during weekly protests against the Apartheid Wall in the village of Bil'in, in the West Bank. The Wall is built on Palestinians' agricultural land and has allowed for continuous expansion of settlements on annexed fields and olive groves. A great portion of the wall is 7-9 meters high – twice the height of the Berlin Wall – with watchtowers, and a “buffer zone” for electric fences, trenches, cameras, sensors, and military patrols. It has destroyed vast areas of Palestinians' farmland, appropriating water supplies, including the major aquifer in the West Bank. There are layers of fencing and razor wire. Nazzal's work brings attention to the loss of land, movement and livelihoods, and the effective expulsion for more Palestinians from their homeland.

Rehab Nazzal, in the tradition of artists who take up the call for social justice, provides a window on her real, grounded experience through her art. Are we to tell her that she cannot mourn her brother, assassinated in an extra-judicial killing? Is she to be denied her own voice and life experience? The transparent attempts to silence Rehab Nazzal echo attempts made throughout history to silence the truth when it challenges power.

We urge you to continue your principled stance, to defend the right of Canadians to see diverse and socially and politically engaging artwork and the right of artists to speak from their experience and conscience.

Sincerely,

Women in Solidarity with Palestine

Naomi Binder Wall, Writer, Toronto

Gita Hashemi, Artist, Toronto

Richard Fung, Filmmaker, Academic, Toronto

Reena Katz, Artist, Toronto

Jillian Rogin, Lawyer, Toronto

Nadia Shoufani, Teacher, Activist, Toronto

Lama Abdul Rahman, Student Councillor, Toronto

Jayce Salloum, Artist/Filmmaker, Vancouver

Adina Ilea, PhD candidate, Department of Criminology, University of Ottawa

Jen Kennedy, Writer, Ottawa

David McNally, Professor of Political Science, York University, Toronto

Elena Basile, PhD Academic Instructor and Translator, Sexual Diversity Studies University
of Toronto and Department of English, York University

Michael Riordon, Writer, Picton, Ontario

Dina Georgis, Professor, University of Toronto

Alexis Mitchell, Artist, PhD Student, University of Toronto, Toronto

Gary Kibbins, Associate Professor, Queen's University, Kingston, ON

Dania Majid, Human Rights Lawyer, Film Festival Programmer, Toronto

Yara Shoufani, McMaster University, Hamilton

Tamira Sawatzky, Architect, Toronto

John Greyson, Film/Video Artist, Toronto
Gary Kinsman, Professor Emeritus of Sociology, Laurentian University, Sudbury, Ontario
Reem Abdul Qadir, Social Worker, Toronto
Janine Marchessault, Professor, York University
Dr. Nazih Khatatba, Journalist, Meshwar Media, Toronto
Anita Block, Toronto
Rola Sayyid, COO, Bisan Inc., Toronto
Bashar Sukhon, P. Eng, CEO, Bisan Inc., Toronto
Ayman Al-Sukhon, Ryerson University, Toronto
Basel Al-Sukhon, Student, Toronto
Monique Mojica, Actor/ Playwright, Toronto
George Prodanou, Retired Documentary Film Producer, Toronto
Carol Rawson, Retired Child Welfare Worker, Toronto, Ontario
Smadar Carmon, Human Rights Activist, Ontario
Ali Mallah, Activist, Toronto
Vera Szoke, High School Teacher, Toronto
Chandler Davis, Professor, University of Toronto
Bill Skidmore, Professor, Carleton University
Itaf Abbas, Community Member, Ottawa
François Villeneuve, Web Developer, Toronto
Freda Guttman, Artist/Activist, Montreal
Asad Ismi, Writer, Toronto
Khaled Mouammar, Former President, Canadian Arab Federation
Taina Maki Chahal, Contract Lecturer, Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, ON
Shawna Robinson, Ottawa, ON
Cynthia Wright, University of Toronto, Toronto
Rana Abdulla, Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA), Winnipeg, Manitoba
Toni Wright, Toronto
Suzanne Weiss, Toronto
Himani Bannerji, Professor, York University, Toronto
Michael Kuttner, Teacher (retired), Toronto
M. Lamontagne, Artist, Montreal
Samar Haddad, Teacher, Toronto
Jessica Karuhanga, Artist, Toronto
Salah Raya, Toronto
Henry N. Lowi, Jurist, Toronto
Aliya Pabani, Artist, Toronto
Daniel Meaney, Toronto
Naim Hilaneh, Toronto
Bassel Ramli, Toronto
Leen Ramli, Marketing Manager, Toronto
Fiona Jeffries, Ottawa, Ontario
Marina Kun, President of Kun Shoulder Rest, Ottawa
Rashmi Luther, Lecturer, School of Social Work, Carleton University, Ottawa
Francisco-Fernando Granados, Artist, Writer, Teacher, Toronto

Andrew Brook, Professor of Philosophy and Cognitive Science, President, Canadian
 Psychoanalytic Society, Carleton University, Ottawa
 Hani Issa, Field Service Technician, Mississauga
 Ronit Little, Toronto, Ontario
 Mohammad Haroon, Sakher Sabeel (Arabic Newspaper), Mississauga, ON
 Amine el-maoued, Electrical Engineer, Mississauga
 Rahman Marie, Retired Engineer, Mississauga, ON
 Muath Abualqumssan, Mechanical Engineer, Calgary
 Mohamad Hamid, Electrician, City of Hamilton
 Ummni Khan, Associate Professor, Carleton University
 Jared Peters, Graduate Student, London, ON
 Fatima Ismail, Retired, Oakville, ON
 Nicolas Sayegh, CPFQ
 Sue Goldstein, International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network (IJAN), Canada
 United Jewish People's Order-Canada, National Executive, Toronto, ON
 Abdullah T. Dahdah, B.Sc., M.A. Accountant Woodbridge, Ontario
 Esmat F. Dahdah, B.A. Real Estate Agent Woodbridge, Ontario
 Issa F. Tawil, P. Eng. Retired Woodbridge, Ontario
 Nada Sidani, Registered Nurse, Humanitarian, Ontario
 Kathy Wazana, Documentary Filmmaker, Toronto
 Olla Qita, Realtor at Remax, Mississauga
 Yvette Gabrail, Realtor at Remax, Mississauga
 Marjan Haidari, Realtor at Remax, Mississauga
 Taiseer hameed, Used Car Dealer, Toronto
 Bilal Affoneh, Category Manager, Brampton
 Dr. Hassan Albasha, Senior Safety Engineer, Oakville, Ontario
 Bonnie Black, Assistant Editor, Vitality Magazine, Toronto ON
 Martha Roth, Independent Jewish Voices, Vancouver, BC
 Independent Jewish Voices-Canada / Voix juives indépendantes, Canada
 Rebecca Garrett, Artist & Videographer, Toronto
 Nahla Abdo, Professor, Ottawa
 Sami Al Zobi, Artist, Ottawa
 Khalid Hamadeh, Student, Kingston, ON
 Marion Bordier, Artist, Ottawa
 Robin Collins, Technologist and Writer, Ottawa
 Omar Shanbour, Kitchener
 Hanan Wahib, Kitchener
 Amer Shanbour, Kitchener
 Rima Alkial, Esthetician, Kitchener
 Mohamad Yanes, Self-employed Restaurant Owner, Kitchener
 Bilal Al-far, Kitchener
 Ragheb Salaymeh, Kitchener
 Bassam Hamada, Kitchener
 Leala Alhanoun, Mississauga
 Shaban Elewa, Hamilton
 Fatmeh Lahham, Hamilton

Bachir Sarhan, Mississauga
Samar Naser, Mississauga
Basel Sarhan, Mississauga
Gorge Tourani, Mississauga
Khalid All Roz, Mississauga
Muner Ahmed, Mississauga
Samer Dare, Mississauga
Majdi Tourani, Mississauga
Fadel Taleb, Mississauga
Maher Sarhan, Mississauga
Rawan All Said, Mississauga
Mohammad Ahmed, Mississauga
Samar Madani, Building Manager, Toronto
Sudki Saleh, Building Manager, Toronto
Mohammed Saleh, Toronto
Yazan Saleh, Student, UFT, Toronto
Mazen Saleh, Western University, Ontario
Raymond El Jamal, Mississauga, ON
Andrew Lugg, Professor Emeritus, University of Ottawa
Mohammad Awbar, Student, Edmonton, Alberta
Tarek Dars, Graphic Designer, Edmonton, Alberta
Ghassan Dars, Student, Edmonton, Alberta
Iyad Arar, Merchant, Edmonton, Alberta
Tania Lindo, Manager, Client Services, Thornhill, ON
Mary Ellen Davis, Independent Filmmaker and part-time Instructor, Montreal
Nadia Abu-Zahra, University Professor, Ottawa
Peige Desjarlais, Graduate Student, Western University, ON
Laila Chebib, Retired Professor, Member of Interfaith groups, Winnipeg, Manitoba
Kam Assi, P. Eng, Milton, Ontario
Elizabeth Block, Potter & Craftswoman, Toronto
Dina Hamza, Fitness Instructor, City of Ottawa
Serene Husni, Filmmaker, Toronto
David Heap, Associate Professor, French & Linguistics, UWO, London, Ontario
People for Peace, London, Ontario
Wendy Goldsmith, Member of People for Peace, London, Ontario
Tina Neves, Pax Christie, Toronto
Mustafa Taamneh, Toronto
Issam Alyamani, Journalist, Toronto
Yasmine Haj, Writer, Toronto
Roberta McRae, Art Professional (Magnetic North Theatre Festival), Ottawa
Rafe Hasan, Business Owner, Winnipeg, Manitoba
Sarah Abdulla, Student - University of Manitoba, Winnipeg - Manitoba
Danah Abdulla, PhD Student, Winnipeg, Manitoba
Rania Abdulla, Fashion Designer, Ottawa, Ontario
Rula Shraydeh, Office Manager, Ottawa, Ontario
Rana Nazzal Hamadeh, Student, B.A. Human Rights, Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario

Naomi Duguid, Author, Photographer, Toronto
Joudat Najjar, Montreal
Sally Lee, Cultural Worker, Toronto
Helen Lee, Filmmaker, Toronto
Khaled Barakat, Vancouver
Charlotte Kates, Vancouver
Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network
Robert Massoud, Event Convener, Toronto
Dawn Dale, Artist, Gatineau, Québec
Anna Khimasia, PhD Candidate, Carleton University, Ottawa
Ashley Wazana, Physician, Montreal
Hala Al Madi, Artist, Ottawa
Jooneed Khan, Writer and Human Rights Activist, Montreal
Basil Al Ziri, Artist, Toronto
Majdi Al Omari, Filmmaker, Montreal, Quebec
Ikenna Onyegbula, Artist, Ottawa, ON
Sandra Bender, Ottawa, ON
Amith Gupta, Ontario
Diane Obomsawin, Filmmaker, Montreal
Margot Francis, Associate Professor, Women's and Gender Studies, Brock University, St.
Catharines, Ontario
Brian Campbell, Activist, Vancouver
Marty Roth, Emeritus Professor of English, Vancouver
Sandy Stienecker, Retired Teacher, Sydenham, Ontario
Ehab Lotayef, Poet & Writer, IT Manager, ECE, McGill University
Andrea D. Fitzpatrick, Associate Professor, History and Theory of Art, University of Ottawa
Adam Saikaley, Musician, Artist, Ottawa, ON
Laila Hamdan, Ottawa
Jake Javanshir, Home Inspector, Independent Jewish Voices, Toronto
Elaina Martin, Founder and Producer, Westfest, City of Ottawa
Stephen Aberle, Performer, Independent Jewish Voices, Vancouver, BC
John Turnbull, Software investor, CanPalNet, Palestine Awareness Coalition, Vancouver
Blake Fitzpatrick, Professor, Toronto
Kathleen Copps, Boycott Israeli Apartheid Campaign, Seriously Free Speech Committee
Marion Pollack, Vancouver, BC
Gene St.Onge, Professional Engineer, Ontario
David Copelin, Playwright, Vancouver
Christia Roberts, M.Sc. Plant Biology, Vancouver, BC
Tyler Levitan, Independent Jewish Voices, Ottawa
Edwin Janzen, Visual Artist and Writer, Montreal
Anna Khimasia, Researcher, Writer and Educator, Ottawa
Halima Sallam, Ottawa, Ontario
Cara Tierney, Artist, Ottawa, Ontario
Seleena Wedderburn, Artist, Ottawa
Margaret Waymann, Pianist, Alexandria, Ontario
Ronald Zerafa, Artist, Toronto

Yassar Askari, Ontario
Jane Power, Vancouver
Alan Geldart, Sound Design, Toronto
Michael Keefer, Professor Emeritus, University of Guelph
Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid (CAIA), Toronto
Aidan Macdonald, Community Legal Worker, Toronto
Andrew Hogill, Physicist, Toronto
Hind Awwad, Toronto
Karen Macrae, Toronto
Mary-Jo Nadeau, Faculty for Palestine, Toronto
Katherine Lapointe, Union Organizer, Toronto
Nadine Nasir, Toronto
Nausheen Quayyum, York University, Toronto
Monira Kitmitto, Member of PH, Oakville
Mohamad Badie Hassan, Ottawa
Yacoub Amash, Mississauga
Ruth Skinner, Graduate Student, London, Ontario
Suhaila El-Batroukh, Kitchener
May Telmissany, Professor, Ottawa
Romy Charles, Vancouver, BC
Sara Angelucci, Adjunct Faculty, Ryerson University
Neda Shabib, Ottawa, ON
Sarah Farahat, Artist, Students United for Palestinian Equal Rights, Portland, OR
Cristy Murray, Bookkeeper, Oregon City, OR
Ghadeer Hussein, Portland, OR
Lauren Kael, Member, Jews for Peace, Portland, Oregon
Johnette Orpinela, Portland, OR
Mike Ellison, PhD Candidate, Environmental Science and Management, Vancouver, USA
Soham Darwish, Teacher/Artist, Portland, Oregon
Maria Sause, Translator, Newport, Oregon, USA
Martha Shade, Artist, Seattle, USA
Mary Ellen Hannigan, Software Engineer, Portland, Oregon, USA
Valerie Fraser, Portland, Oregon USA
Hanny Selbak, Mechanical Engineer, Artist, and Activist, Portland, Oregon, USA
Sally Ann Wells, Peace Activist - Justice for All, Portland, Oregon, USA
Culture and Conflict Forum, San Jose, California, USA
Marcelo Paonlinelli, Documentary Filmmaker, Toronto
Rabab Abdulhadi, Professor, San Francisco State University
Dr. Terri Ginsberg, film scholar, New York, NY, USA
Ghaida Moussa
US Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel
Sara Swetsoff, representing Students United for Palestinian Equal Rights at Portland State
University, Portland, Oregon
Faculty for Palestine (F4P)
Edith Cacciatore, Retired Nurse Practitioner, member of “14 friends of
Palestine,” organization, Novato, CA

Rev. Fahed Abuakel, moderator of the 214th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church
USA, Presbyterian minister in Atlanta, Georgia, USA