



**PROJECT WEEK
2023
at the Israel Arts and Science Academy**

Though each student at IASA is enrolled in one of our four departments—Humanities, Arts, Music and one of several Science tracks, the majority of their experience at IASA, from classes to meals to living space, are shared with fellow students of the same grade. But, every February the entire campus changes during Project Week (which is actually 10 days long)!

Project Week (PW) is the culmination of each student's independent, in-depth research on a topic she/he is strongly passionate about. From the very beginning of each school year, every student devotes many hours each week to their personal project. During PW, final projects are showcased throughout the campus.

Students connect with their peers to organize events and activities on campus and in the local community. Here, the student body divides by discipline rather than by grade, giving students the opportunity to work with and learn from students of all ages in their respective departments. Interspersed with activities and lectures planned by the staff of each department, the students spend the rest of the week working on their projects individually and with their fellow students.



In the weeks before, 11th and 12th grade students submit a proposal for a project they want to pursue. As projects get approved, they are listed on a bulletin board in the central lobby creating a sense of excitement and anticipation begins to bubble through the school's halls. For 10th graders, Project Week is an opportunity to choose and pursue a personal project that excites them, learning from the upperclassmen along the way. Expert mentors are made available to students to advise on their projects. Mentors are drawn from a range of experts in their field connected to IASA, including: university professors, alumni, and experienced professionals.

10th graders organize the Keynote Ceremony and the 11th graders organize a prom. Along with those traditions, departments creatively collaborate activities to represent their departments, grades, hometowns, or whatever else they choose, for the entire student body. The projects created are also displayed for visitors and guests to appreciate.

For students in the Music Department, PW was especially busy. As students prepared performances for the entire school, the staff organized several trips and meetings with leading Musicians to help and inspire them along the way. The first was to The Percussion Center in Netanya, participating in a workshop with professional percussionist and founder of the Tremolo Percussion Ensemble, Tomer Yariv. The day concluded with a sunset performance in Shlulit HaHoref Park. Soprano Merav Barnea, accompanied by professional pianist Arik Halevi (graduate and teacher of IASA), performed a concert focusing on German Romanticism, from Schubert to

Mahler. Students also participated in a workshop with violinist Barak Shosberger on the relationships between the theory of their works and how they perform. Finally, a special multimedia lecture on the life and work of composer and conductor Bernard Hermann was organized by our music teacher Matan Seri, accompanied by live performances of Hermann's work by a student string quartet.



Chemistry students prepared an Escape Room for the entire school, featuring challenges based on chemistry that non-Chemistry students, the entire school and its visitors could enjoy. As teacher Guy Ashkenazi puts it:

“In addition to their individual projects, Chemistry students decided to do something experiential and fun for the whole school. Our idea [for the Escape Room] was to create riddles connected to Chemistry, that you don't need to know Chemistry for, but that people could really get inquisitive about and enjoy. Through these guided experiments performed in the room, participants get an appreciation for the beauty of these chemical processes. I think it really went over well with the school!”

Individual projects were wide-ranging, from science to computer programming and design, to historical research, to a range of art exhibits. Our students really raised the bar with inspiring, fascinating and original projects! A few of this year's highlights included:

- chess board with specially designed pieces created from a 3D printer
- study into the history of the Liberty Bell in Jerusalem's Independence Park
- historically-accurate reconstruction of authentic replica chainmail armor
- pop song created using Ableton software
- short stop-motion (claymation) film
- computerized simulation of wormholes (Einstein-Rosen bridges)
- exhibit detailing how planes fly
- 'Does spinal trauma lead to G.B.M tumors?' – an explanatory exhibit featuring quotes from the current medical literature
- Vivienne Westwood-inspired knit scarf
- hats woven using traditional 19th century methods.

These and dozens more are a direct result of hours and hours dedicated to individual work. But if you ask any student, the culmination of these projects during Project Week is the high point of the year. As one Humanities student put it:

“It's great to take the break, be with the kids in [the] department. It's really refreshing! Great for getting into new ways of thinking [about things]. Absolutely the highlight of my school year!”

Project Week 2023 was another great success!! It was truly a very exciting and rewarding experience for everyone involved! The events were well attended, including IASA staff, parents and members of the wider community.