



## BEZALEL ACADEMY OF ARTS AND DESIGN, JERUSALEM

JULY 2011

PRESS RELEASE

### BEZALEL GRADUATES AWARDED PRESTIGIOUS FULBRIGHT SCHOLARSHIPS

**Two graduates of the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design, Yael Alkalay and Ronit Levin Delgado, have been chosen to represent Israel as Fellows of the Fulbright Master's Program for Israeli students. This is the first year that arts graduates from Israel have been chosen as Fulbright Fellows and the first year that there is a Master's Program.**

The US Government's Fulbright Program is one of the world's most prestigious and widely known academic exchange programs. This past year, 24 Israelis applied for Master's fellowships, and 12 were chosen to be interviewed. Only three Fulbright Fellowships were awarded: two to the Bezalel art graduates and one to a law student from Hebrew University.

Alkalay and Levin Delgado will receive scholarship support for studies in the US during the 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 academic years. Fulbright grants for Master's students cover tuition, fees and living expenses for a maximum of two years of study in the United States.

The main goal of the Fulbright Program, initiated in 1946 by Senator J. William Fulbright, is to strengthen the basis for peace by strengthening mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the peoples of partner countries around the world. Student and faculty exchanges at the highest possible level of academic excellence are the principal means employed by the Fulbright Program to achieve this goal.

Bezalel is Israel's leading academy of art and design, and one of the most prestigious of its kind in the world. Established in 1906, with the support of the founder of Modern Zionism, Theodor Herzl, Bezalel is the source of some of the most creative talent emerging from the Middle East. Bezalel has built an international network of art and design excellence. Its alumni exhibit their work in the world's leading venues, and the Academy is a focus and a destination for students and the creative community from across the globe.

"The fact that two of our graduates have been chosen as Fulbright Fellows is a wonderful reflection on our Academy," says Professor Arnon Zuckerman, President of Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design. "The demand for Bezalel is very high, so we are able to select the best Israeli talent, and the Fulbright scholarships show the level of our teaching."

"We are very active internationally and our students have exhibited at prestigious venues such as Sotheby's London and the Milan Design Week. One of our animation students was chosen to screen her graduation film at the recent Cannes Film Festival, an enormous honor for her and wonderful recognition for the Academy."

Bezalel Academy has also made it onto Forbes.com's ['Names You Need to Know'](#) list.

Yael Alkalay, who graduated with a Bachelor of Design cum-laude from Bezalel in 2009, has won many honors and awards, including the Bezalel Excellence Award in the Visual Communications Department four years running and the Golden Star for Design Excellence at the Designed In Israel 4 Exhibition. She will pursue a Master's degree in Computer Art and Design at the Dynamic Media Institute at Massachusetts College of Art and Design in Boston.

“Being accepted to the prestigious Fulbright Scholarship, to join this group of well-respected and inspiring people, is a great honor,” says Alkalay. “I’m thrilled to take part in the Fulbright program and hope to have an enriching and meaningful study experience.

“For me, Interaction Design is the future on both a macro and individual level, forming an essential part of my professional, creative and personal life. I’m excited by the opportunity to continue exploring and studying this fascinating and constantly evolving field in this unique academic framework.”

Ronit Levin Delgado graduated from Bezalel in 2008 with a Bachelor of Fine Art and will continue this track by pursuing her Masters in Fine Art at Montclair State University in Montclair, New Jersey. She too has had various honors and awards bestowed on her, including a Bezalel Academy scholarship, an award for excellence in theory studies at the Academy, and the Wyckoff Scholarship for Portfolio excellence from Montclair University.

“I was extremely thrilled and happy to learn I had won the prestigious Fulbright scholarship,” says Levin Delgado. “It was a long and difficult process, which started over a year ago, but all the hard work and effort were absolutely worth it! I feel very proud and honored. Receiving the Fulbright scholarship has certainly changed my life already. Having that faith in my talent and abilities is a great motivator, and having my tuition and living expenses paid for is a great weight off my shoulders.

“But more than this, I’m going to live in a foreign country for two years. That’s a great personal change. I will be able to explore social phenomena, people and events that I haven’t experienced before. I know my art will be further enriched by the cross-cultural exchange. I look forward to learning and, in return, educating my peers, and furthering the artistic dialogue between our countries. On a personal note, the diverse student population in my global community university will give me the chance to further research into the ways art impacts its viewers, and so make my art more accessible and socially influential.”

The United States-Israel Educational Foundation (USIEF), established by the Governments of the United States and Israel in 1956, is responsible for the administration of Israel’s participation in the Fulbright Program.

In the years since USIEF’s establishment over 1,200 US citizens and over 1,500 Israelis have taken part in a variety of Fulbright exchanges. US alumni have made their mark primarily in the academic world. Israeli Fulbright alumni fill leading roles in academia, government, medical and social services, and literature.

At the start of the next semester in September, 15 Israeli Fulbright student fellows will travel to the US and 13 American student fellows will come to Israel.

According to Judy Stavsky, deputy director of USIEF, previously only grants to doctoral students were awarded. “The emphasis of our grant program has been changed, and we now give priority to a program for Master’s students. This is the first year that art students have been chosen to go to the USA for degree purposes, mainly because in the past we didn’t have an MA program for Israelis,” she says.

“However, we have hosted several art students from the USA over the years. This year, two US students, Abraham Storer and Michael Kahn, will be affiliated with Bezalel. We also had two student fellows at Bezalel in 2007 – Raphael Cohn and Rachel Weber.

“Ronit and Yael are both very talented art students,” says Stavsky. “Both have won prizes and have exhibited their works numerous times.” And these are just two of the many criteria used to choose the Fulbright Scholars. Others include academic excellence; possession of skills required to promote mutual understanding between the United States and Israel; leadership qualities; and English language proficiency.

After completion of their Master's program, Fulbright grantees are eligible to apply for a visa for up to 18 months of academic training (provided the fellow has a concrete job offer).

"The Fulbright Program aims to bring a little more knowledge, a little more reason, and a little more compassion into world affairs and thereby to increase the chance that nations will learn at last to live in peace and friendship." – Senator J. William Fulbright

## **Ends**

For further information about Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design Jerusalem, please contact: Darryl Egnal at Koteret Group, Tel Aviv on 054 884 5237/ [darryl\\_e@koteret.com](mailto:darryl_e@koteret.com) or Adam Murray at Koteret Group, Tel Aviv on 054 215 2654 / [adam\\_m@koteret.com](mailto:adam_m@koteret.com)

## **About Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design, Jerusalem**

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Bezalel has a broad and multifaceted scope of professional and artistic activities involving both pioneering state-of-the-art design methods as well as ancient techniques. The academy offers workshops unparalleled anywhere else in Israel in a variety of fields that have seen many changes in the past decades: industrial design, architecture, animation & video art, visual communications, fine art, photography fashion & jewelry, history & theory and ceramics & glass.

Both the faculty and the student body are driven by a passion to create and by their meticulous attention to quality and excellence. These two cornerstones, plus the Academy's commitment to fostering creativity and opportunity amongst all communities in Israel, have positioned Bezalel at the center of Israel's creative and artistic scene, making it instrumental in shaping and enriching the country's cultural identity.

[www.bezalel.ac.il](http://www.bezalel.ac.il)