

# Make Your Own Israeli Music Video

Celebrating Israeli Culture and Expression (Pride)



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## Introduction:

We believe that one of the most beautiful expressions of (To be a Free People in Our Land) is the flourishing of Jewish culture and art that has come as a natural progression from the Jewish people building a thriving society in their ancestral homeland.

## Goals:

Reaching intimacy with Israeli popular culture.

Our identity is enriched and informed by many aspects of popular culture, yet Israeli popular culture often remains distant from us due to language. Thankfully, technology and our own creativity can now act as a bridging tool.

In this activity, we will look at the way videos of several popular Israeli rock songs communicate – through visuals and through translations. We will then make our own interpretive music videos, and share our finished products with one another.

In this way, through creative interpretation, we will 'own' Israeli songs that tell fascinating and different stories about Israel today.

# Instructions:

## Part one – what does a video do?

In class, explore three songs and their video representations.

In this way the class will gain a language and an appreciation for the potential of this form.

1. "Hebrewman", by Ehud Banai. (see lyrics below)

**Watch here:** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=naHbB15Eav8>

Speak up, the language of the Hebrewman  
Loud and clear! the language of the Hebrewman!.

It is the language of the prophets  
of the sign up on the wall  
It is old and sacred  
It will open up your soul.  
Speak up, the language of the Hebrewman  
Loud and clear! the language of the Hebrewman.

From the deepest mess of downtown Babylon  
It will take you to the next train to Mount Zion  
It will get you up, it will make you fly  
the language of the Hebrewman will take you high

You know Abraham spoke the language of the hebrewman  
And also Jesus from Nazareth and Maria Magdalene  
Einstein, Jeremiah the Dylan and the Cohen  
They know something about the language of the Hebrew man...

And when the Lord said let there be Light  
It was in the language of the Hebrewman  
And when Moses said: let my people go  
It was in the language of the Hebrewman  
Speak the language of the Hebrewman.

[And on that day a great new light will shine]  
[The crack will open slowly, slowly will fall the wall]  
[And when the time comes on will come in the name of the One]  
[All the whole world will know one language]  
Speak the language of the Hebrewman.

[And when the time comes on will come in the name of the One]  
[All the whole world will know one language]  
[Slowly we'll build the Temple, line by line & letter by letter]  
[Don't say bye-bye to me, just say "Lehitra'ot"]  
Speak the language of the Hebrewman.

And let us all say halleluya  
Let us all say : amen  
A day will come and everybody  
Will speak the language of the Hebrewman.

## Guiding questions:

- Which aspects of the video enhanced the song, which aspects got in the way?
- Which images helped you understand something, and which images pulled you further from understanding?
- Were there any moments when you felt the video was flowing with the song?
- Were there any moments when you felt the video was trying to say something different from the song?
- What do you think about the way the song praises Hebrew, but is mostly in English?

## 2. Yetziat Mitzrayim (Exodus from Egypt), by Etti Ankri

**Watch here:** [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L\\_j5QpvR-pY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L_j5QpvR-pY)

To leave in the exodus from Egypt  
To arrive in the desert  
Perhaps we'll find some water there  
On the way to the mountain

May it open in two  
The salt water  
And we shall pass in between  
All those who are weeping

And they are gaining on us  
An army of cavalry  
It is difficult for Moshe  
The people have no faith in their hearts

The beach's touch is calming  
The sea gapes open its mouth  
What if we return to Egypt?  
Fear has no memory

We were builders of pyramids  
Interpreters of dreams  
We had nothing we could call our own  
Only salt and tears

This is Jacob's pain  
Over little Joseph  
Sown within us  
Is senseless brotherly hatred

And sometimes it seems to me  
When I am ready to give up  
Pharaoh is my disorder  
And I am sad for Egypt

And sometimes it seems to me  
What we are still there  
Walking towards the mountain  
Begging for water

May it open up in two  
The salt water  
And we shall pass in between -  
All those that are walking

## Guiding questions:

- Which images in the video enhanced the song, which images got in the way?
- Which images helped you understand something, and which images pulled you further from understanding?
- Were there any moments when you felt the video was flowing with the song?
- Were there any moments when you felt the video was trying to say something different from the song?
- Can you imagine a Bible song ever getting major mainstream airplay in the States? What do you think it tells you about Israel, that this song did?

3. Nothing at all – Knisiyat HaSechel

Play the [video clip of the song by Knisiyat HaSechel without translation](#).

What is the video saying to you?

[Here you should allow for a free-ranging conversation. If opinions are not forthcoming, throw out some observations: the fact that all the actors are children, that at first the kids are at an army exhibition, that there are kids from all ethnic and religious backgrounds. Why/what is the child climbing? What of the oversized army uniform, stripping off the uniform? And what of the foetus-shaped gathering of bodies?]

There are no wrong answers for this conversation, personal interpretations and individual responses are welcome.

Now play the [clip with the subtitles included](#).

The words to this song come from a poem written by a young soldier, Erez Shtark. He died in a notorious military helicopter crash in February 1997. The poem was read out at his funeral, and eventually turned into a rock song by Knisiyat HaSechel.

How does seeing the translation affect your understanding of the video?

## Part Two

### Make your own!

After this introductory lesson, send the students home with a clear assignment: Create your own interpretive video to an Israeli song. The video must include a simultaneous translation, and some form of additional imagery – stills, animation, or video – that for you expresses/enhances the meaning of the song.

Students may choose the song from the three offered in Part One, or from the three songs presented below. They can work with any computer program they wish – you might want to gather wisdom from the class, suggesting programs to work with.

The next meeting, they must present their music videos to the class.

## Part three

### the screening

If more than one student has made a video of the same song, we recommend screening all videos of the same song in one batch, so that the students can experience how the same song can be interpreted in multiple ways.

[This multi-vocality, you may point out, is a crucial tool for meeting Israel in its full complexity.]

After each video, or set of videos, lead a short discussion on the songs and on their interpretations.



## 3. Da (Alma Zohar) – —

Listen here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gTs8cfWiTh8>

Look at you  
Lying, hiding  
Not trusting anyone  
Prefer to be alone  
No outgoing, no incoming  
Not giving, and not seeking love

With you everything is  
mask upon mask  
With a lie in your soul  
Hurt people  
Don't know how to ask for forgiveness  
How do you live?  
Cold and alienated  
Closed and introverted  
Look in a mirror  
and see a stranger

Know who you are  
Know where you came from  
And where you are going  
And before Whom you will give your  
accounting

Look at you using and throwing away  
Chewing up and spitting out  
You have everything  
And it's not enough  
You are empty  
How can you distance all who are close?  
How do you suppress all that's not good?  
Don't let anyone love you

Know  
who you are  
Know where you came from  
And where you are going  
And before Whom you will give your  
accounting

Know that all is quid pro quo  
All that you do  
in this world  
Will always return to you  
Until you change direction  
Until you seek repair  
You will have no rest  
It haunts you

## 4. Shma – Sarit Hadad – —

Listen here: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xDCOo4\\_LEXk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xDCOo4_LEXk)

When the heart cries  
only God hears  
The pain rises out of the soul  
A man falls down before he sinks  
With a short prayer he breaks the silence

Shma (Hear) Israel my God,  
you' are the omnipotent  
You gave me my life,  
you gave me everything

In my eyes are tears,  
the heart cries silently  
And when the heart is quiet,  
the soul screams

Shma (Hear) Israel my God,  
now I am alone  
Make me strong my God;  
make it that I won't be afraid

The pain is big,  
and there's no where to run away  
Make it end  
Because I have no strength left

When the heart cries,  
Time stands still  
All of a sudden, the man sees his entire life  
He doesn't want to go to the unknown  
He cries to his God right before a big fall

Shma (Hear) Israel my God....

- The words of this song are taken from Pirkei Avot - Ethics of the Fathers. Who do you think the "you" in the song is? Who do you think she is talking to?
- What's the song about? (knowing yourself, not hiding, being accountable, taking initiative)?

## 5. Lo Nafsik Lachlom (We Won't Stop Dreaming) - Mook E

Listen to it here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uIGLOVI0UH8>

What have we done to ourselves that it hurts this bad?  
 And how is it so dark here if we're all stars  
 How can we still not see that the skies are clear  
 For every reason to stay -  
 I have ten leave to leave  
 Far from my eyes and my heart,  
 We only Remember the good.  
 But I choose to restart every day  
 And yet choose each day  
 To stay close  
 I will not stop dreaming.  
 I will not stop loving.

Hiding from the very things we chase  
 Staying constantly at arm's length  
 So very empty of content, only our bellies are full  
 Maybe we need to destroy it all and start over  
 And this whole song is a prayer

That we don't stop dreaming...

And how strange it is  
 When we're strangers to ourselves  
 We reach out to touch what is impossible  
 Today we want to taste  
 From what will only come tomorrow  
 Is this freedom  
 Or is man buried within himself?

They won't turn me into a viewing statistic  
 Or to a purchasing power  
 Of a potential sale  
 Rumors of war will not extinguish me  
 Obstacles will not stop me  
 Fences will not trip me  
 You much leave – in order to return  
 To distance yourself – in order to long for something  
 Reality is screaming in my ear  
 I can no longer hear  
 I hold my head up high  
 If I don't I'll drown  
 And despite everything I know

We won't stop dreaming...