

## Children of Gaza Memorial Quilt

The Children of Gaza Memorial Quilt is a community-based arts initiative, inviting people to contribute to a large-scale quilting project naming and remembering the children of Gaza martyred in the ongoing genocide.

Quilts have a long tradition of protest, comfort and memory alongside being practical, treasured decorative textiles. Quilts have captured the personal, family and community histories of people whose stories might otherwise go untold who are marginalised or actively silenced by mainstream narratives. For example, the coded quilts of the American Underground Railroad<sup>1</sup>; the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt<sup>2</sup>, the Arpilleras of memory and resistance in Chile<sup>3</sup>, the Covid19 online global quilt<sup>4</sup> and the painted story quilts of African American artist Faith Ringgold<sup>5</sup>.

We are horrified by the unimaginable numbers of children killed in Gaza by Israel. But children are not numbers - children are children, and each and every child had a name, a family, had dreams, and should have had a future. Names carry histories, cultures, collective and personal identities. We must know and remember their names. We must never forget.

We need a collective response to the immense loss, to mark and remember their young lives. The idea is to create a quilt made up from individual decorative patches or 'blocks', each one representing a child (or children, siblings). It will record both those whose names and ages we know and those who are as yet unnamed – missing or lost under the rubble. To facilitate this, we will share the children's names most recent gathered by the Know Their Names project.

Each patch will be designed by an individual contributor using any chosen technique (or combination) to create their square – for example applique, Tatreez, embroidery, glued, beaded, painted or photo technique. We invite anyone who wishes to join us and contribute to this collective memorial project to make a patch and share this call out. You can do this as an individual or you may want to join with others and create a quilting group in your community.

To begin the project, we are inviting 25 -30 people to make and contribute a 'block' which will be collected and sewn together to make the first part of what will go on to become a growing series of quilted panels made up of 100 squares (10 x 10 patches).

Once the first patches have been collected, we will invite further contributions from groups and individuals, organising workshops in different locations to facilitate wider involvement.

As more patches are created and contributed, each 100 square quilt will be brought together to be displayed - or can be carried together as banners - a powerful visual testament and remembrance for all the children murdered in this genocide.

For more information, please contact Fiona Bailey

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<sup>1</sup> <https://folklife.si.edu/magazine/underground-railroad-quilt-codes>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.aidsmemorial.org/quilt>

<sup>3</sup> <https://sur.conectas.org/en/women-who-weave-together-memories-and-resistance-chilean-arpilleras/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.katejust.com/covid19-global-quilt>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.faithringgold.com/project-type/story-quilts-80s/>

### Template:

- Begin with a fabric square, size 30 x 30 cm
- Decorate an area of 20 x 20 cm (leaving a 5cm border for hemming), using motifs, symbols and/or patterns you feel significant using your chosen technique (or combination of techniques) – e.g. applique, Tatreez, embroidery, glued, beaded, painted, photo-technique (e.g. cyanotype).
- Incorporate the name of the child and their age into your design (there will be access to a shared document where the names of martyred children are listed, or you may already know and have the name of a child in mind). Or you might dedicate your patch to a child or children as yet un-named
- A message and/or poem can also be included in your design if you wish.

Cut each patch cut to 30cm x 30 cm. Leaving a clear margin of 5cm at each edge for hemming, decorate your design within a 20cm x 20cm block

