Warm congratulations to the School of Fine Arts, from where four artists have won the Ministry of Culture and Sports' Sharet Prize for Plastic Art for 2014: the photographer Pesi Girsch, the multidisciplinary artist Assi Meshullam, who teach at the Art Department, the sculptor Shay Id Alony and the fine artist Katz Youri, graduates of the department’s Master's Program (Master of Fine Arts). The prize is aimed at artists aged 35 and above, and according to the Ministry of Culture, it “expresses the dedication of Israeli society to creativity and its products as well as the value Israel places on them and their contribution to society”. Ten artists won the prize this year and each will receive 50,000 shekels (ILS).

Natalia Yakimchuk, Director of the Russian Cultural Center in Israel, and Igor Popov, Honorary Consul of Russia, visited the University. The pair were welcomed by the Interdisciplinary Clinical Center and listened to Prof. Rivka Yahav, Head of the Center, about its work. They also met with Prof. Hanan Alexander, from whom they received a full overview of the Arts Therapy Program in the Russian language, in the hope of creating such an additional program in cooperation with the Russian Center.

The Moshal Scholarship Program, the aim of which is to help students with high potential and motivation, despite the challenges they face on a financial and personal level, who want to make a meaningful change in their lives, was launched at the University. This year three students from the Department of Computer Sciences were chosen to receive educational and social assistance during the course of their first degree studies. They will also take part in the Moshal Scholarship Program in Israel and in South Africa. This group will be accompanied by a group of scholars from the Technion as well.

The trend for a gluten-free diet is quickly gaining momentum, despite human beings having eaten wheat for more than 8,000 years. Scientists in the field of agriculture are trying to change the proteins in industrial crops to make the nutrients more accessible and nutritious. Prof. Tsion Fahima, Head of the Institute of Evolution and Director of the Gene Bank for Wild Cereals, said that “throughout the world there are 160 million children who suffer from protein deficiency. If we can improve the protein content of wheat, we will succeed in upgrading nutrition and perhaps resolving this problem”.

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A new blog written by Dana Rademacher, a student in the University's International School, was launched a couple of weeks ago. Dana relates her experiences as a student in Israel and on her academic path. "I hope that many students will come to study here, at the University of Haifa, as a result of my blog," she says. Here is a link to her blog: Dana's blog.

The Younes and Soraya Nazarian Library opened an exhibition to commemorate the centenary of the beginning of the First World War. Between the Trenches displayed at the entrance to the Younes and Soraya Nazarian Library is the fruit of a wonderful collaboration between the University of Haifa's School of Arts, the School of History and the Library. The exhibition displays, amongst other things, collectors' items collected from family members of our faculty members and other information items from the Library itself.

At the end of November, the Library held a launch event to the Corporal Album Website. This website reveals a unique and rare photo album which includes 142 black and white photos that depict life in the Land of Israel during the tumultuous years of the Arab Revolt, 1937-38. The Corporal Album website includes the entire original album which was digitally preserved by the Younes and Soraya Nazarian Library. It is presented to the public through the website alongside explanations about the historical and geographical background of each photo. This album is a fascinating visual depiction of the cultural backdrop of the Land of Israel at the time, especially the Galilee and the Northern part of the country. The following is a link to the entire album: http://lib.haifa.ac.il/collections/corporal/index.php/p1.