

# *Wall of Tears* memorial to child victims of the Gaza genocide comes to Dearborn, Michigan

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Created by artist-photographer Phil Buehler, the *Wall of Tears* is “a public artwork memorializing the 18,457+ children killed in Gaza from October 7th, 2023 until July 19, 2025.”

That’s more than one child killed every hour. The work first appeared in Brooklyn, New York on January 29, the anniversary of the death of Hind Rajab. On June 11, it was brought to PEACE Park East in Dearborn, Michigan (13621 Michigan Ave, across from the Arab American National Museum) where it will remain on display through the end of July.

The *Wall* is 50 feet long, and towers at seven and a half feet high. The name of each martyred child is listed in small letters, in both Arabic and Roman, in the chronological order of his or her death, as is the age when he or she was killed. Boys names are highlighted in light grey, and girls in white. The names completely cover the wall, from top to bottom and along its entire length. One has to stoop down to read the names near the ground and stretch upward to see those at the top.

The massacre of children in Gaza has been described by UN human rights expert Chris Sidoti as the “greatest of any conflict in recorded warfare.” A June 2026 UN Commission report found that Israeli forces intentionally and directly targeted children—not as collateral damage, but as deliberate targets, using precision sniper rifles, quadcopter drones and aerial munitions that gave operators “a high degree of clear visual confirmation of the target, including whether the target is a child.”

The scale and relentless nature of this atrocity is reflected in the scale of the Wall and the density of the names, stacked in enormously high columns one after another for 50 feet. Girls and boys alike were killed. Many died one year old or less than one.

Printed across the middle of the wall amid the

thousands of names and ages are also several dozen black and white photographs of certain children, sourced from news coverage by the *Guardian* and *Washington Post*, as well as from family members on Twitter. Each photo has a short description of the child’s life and how he or she was killed. Close viewing is required to read the small print, but the faces of the children are large enough to see from farther away.

Many of those photographed, it is explained, died in groups. “Liyan Salah, 1. Died along with her four brothers, Hassan, 10, Ismail, 9, Hanan, 5 and Majd, 3.” Omar Shamlakh, who died aged less than one, was “the youngest of 10 victims across three generations of the same family that was killed in an Israeli airstrike. ... They only found two whole bodies. The others were in parts.”

Some descriptions provide a sense of the child’s life and aspirations. Hala Abu Saada, killed at age 14, “trained in sign language to accompany deaf and mute children. She translated two songs from the ‘Fahim’ children’s album that became popular four months ago.” Ghani Al-Karanz, killed at age 8, “dreamed of being famous on YouTube and having her own channel there.”

One can’t help but be moved by the *Wall of Tears*. It is a powerful, unanswerable indictment of the Gaza genocide. Congratulations to artist Phil Buehler.

In Dearborn, the wall is displayed wrapped around a four-sided fence, and visitors can walk entirely around the exhibition. From the nearby bench facing one of the walls, visitors can sit and take in a broader view.

While freely accessible and well-enough displayed, the installation is somewhat tucked away in a small, low-traffic park. This reviewer was there for over 30 minutes on Saturday afternoon—that is, before the heat

wave—and didn't see a single other visitor. People passing by on the sidewalk, of whom there were many, wouldn't know it was there.

That's unfortunate, because it's quite powerful. If this was located on a busy sidewalk anywhere in America, people would be stopping and talking about it all day.



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