Zahava Sherez

1. What’s my piece about and why?

 My installation “Those People Are Us” is about immigration, refugees, and the Jewish nomad.

I belong to a Jewish family and my children are the 6th generation of consecutive immigrants. Immigrants leave a country not

because they are looking for a frivolous change but because they are fleeing a political, economic, or social upheaval/persecution.

My maternal great grandparents and grandparents fled the Russian pogroms of the late 19th century, and moved to Argentina.

My parents, were born in Argentina, but decided to move to Israel with my brother in the late 1940’s because Argentina became the refuge

to Nazi war criminals. My three sons were born in Israel but I decided to move to the USA so that they wouldn’t grow up to be soldiers in a

war zone with many unresolved humanitarian issues.

2. What’s the most impacting event you’ve experienced with this art piece?

\* When I first showed this installation, and the complete body of work it belongs to, people’s comments were profound and very moving.

It didn’t matter what background the person had the comments were very similar. From Chinese to European, from African Americans

to White Americans, everybody related to the experience of being a nomad/refugee/immigrant either as themselves or someone in

their immediate family. Some people became very emotional telling me their grandparents stories.

\* In September 2015 I showed this installation in a gallery in Paris. The opening reception and my artist talk coincided with one of the most

devastating images about the Syrian refugees: the toddler who floated fully dressed out of the Mediterranean Sea. The public was raw and

vulnerable and they connected to my art piece and my words in a very profound and moving way.

Thank you for doing this,

Zahava