

BRICUP Newsletter 57

BRICUP

British Committee for the
Universities of Palestine

October 2012

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World Social Forum

Many BRICUP supporters will know of the World Social Forum, a counter-hegemonic event that takes place each year in Brazil. This year it is taking place at the end of November, and there is a single unifying topic – Free Palestine. Thousands are expected to attend from round the world.

Many topics will be up for discussion there, and no doubt BDS (Boycott Divestment Sanctions) will figure prominently among them. But while a number of groups are preparing to engage in discussions on Cultural Boycott, there is a danger that Academic Boycott will not receive the attention it deserves.

The Forum will be attended by – and followed by – many thousands of activists, most of them young and many of them with academic connections. This is an unusual opportunity. We are liaising with PACBI and with sister organisations in Canada, India, the USA and our friends in EPACBI

(European Platform for Academic and Cultural Boycott), and others, to make sure that we grasp it. The aims will be to

- seed national academic boycott organisations in countries which don't yet have one
- establish a global network of academic boycott organisations
- extend the academic boycott to Latin America, where there is limited visible activity

BRICUP has developed a set of topics for workshop discussion at WSF which we think will help towards achieving these aims, and which we are currently discussing with the other academic boycott organisations. If we are to play our part in making this happen, we need an effective BRICUP delegation at WSF Free Palestine. The cost for each member will be of the order of £800 to £1000.

Our supporters list is distinguished in quality but less so in quantity. For that reason, we need donations on this occasion that are large enough to make a significant difference - say, as much as you might spend on a meal out for two. Or more.

Donations may be made by sending a cheque made out to BRICUP (with an accompanying message 'WSF' please) to

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Political closure of an Israeli university department

URGENT REQUEST FOR SUPPORT

Dear BRICUP supporter

The Department of Politics and Government at Ben-Gurion University is under threat of closure. The Department's staff of 9 include some of the bravest and most outspoken of Israel's internal academic critics, of whom the best known internationally is Professor Neve Gordon.

By all the usual assessment criteria the Department performs not merely as well as but considerably better than similar departments at Israeli universities. The motivation for this closure move is not academic, it is political. If it succeeds all dissident academics at Israeli universities will feel vulnerable.

Background information on this extraordinary affair is provided below. (More information is available on request.)

We are asking you to put your signature, as an academic, to the attached letter. The Council for Higher Education will very soon decide on a motion for closure, so time is of the essence. We plan to send this letter to Israel's Minister of Education and all members of the Council no later than October 9th.

To sign, access

<http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/academics-to-gideon-saar/>

Please enter your title (Prof/Dr.) and academic institution.

Factsheet on the proposed closure

Last year Israel's Council of Higher Education (CHE) Sub-Committee for overseeing and evaluating teaching quality set up an apparently routine review of the country's political science departments, and established an evaluation committee with international members. All 8 departments in the country received some criticism.

However from the beginning the process became mired in irregularities. Professor Ian Lustick, an internationally recognised expert on Israeli society

and politics at the University of Pennsylvania was removed from the evaluation committee for unknown reasons. As a result the original committee chair, Professor Robert Shapiro of Columbia University, resigned. The evaluation committee was then recomposed, with Professor Thomas Risse of Berlin's Free University as chair.

The evaluation committee recommended several changes in the Ben-Gurion department, the most significant of which were to increase the number of staff, and to introduce more mainstream (positivist, quantitative) material into the curriculum. The committee also criticised the "excessive social activism" of staff members. The department, in cooperation with two members of the international evaluation committee (one of whom was Professor Risse), swiftly implemented the principal recommendations. The evaluation committee expressed itself satisfied, and indeed congratulated the university on the department's constructive response.

However early in September the CHE Sub-Committee ignored this report from its evaluation committee, and instead decided that the Department should be prevented from registering students from the 2013-4 academic year – tantamount to a closure order. This decision comes up for confirmation at the full meeting of CHE on October 23rd.

These events have not taken place in a vacuum. There has been a long-standing and aggressive campaign against the department for its members' outspokenness about the occupation and its consequences. Professor Gordon attracted particular venom for an article he wrote in the Los Angeles Times in 2009 supporting the movement for Boycott Divestment and Sanctions against Israel. In 2010 Im Tirtzu, an extreme Zionist organisation based largely in the illegal settlements of the Occupied West Bank, issued an open letter demanding that Ben-Gurion University stop the "anti-Zionist bias" in its Department of Politics and Government. The letter alleged that 9 out of 11 teachers in the department were involved in subversive left-wing activities. Indeed it is plausible to see the very establishment of the review of Israel's political science departments as a response to the Im Tirtzu attack.

Professor Rivka Carmi, President of Ben-Gurion University, has written an open letter to Israel's academic community about this unprecedented attack on academic freedom. If the closure decision is upheld by CHE, she warns, it "will constitute a devastating blow to academic independence in Israel". Her full message is reproduced below. Further information can be found at

<http://che.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Ben-Gurion-Report.pdf>

[the official evaluation report on Ben Gurion's Department of Politics and Government];

<http://isacademyunderattack.wordpress.com/2012/09/18/inaccuracies-and-fallacies-of-the-report-submitted-by-the-international-evaluation-committee-on-the-department-of-politics-and-government/>

[a critical analysis of the report]; and

<http://toal.org/2012/09/19/david-newman-on-the-assault-on-politics-government-at-ben-gurion-university/>

[A detailed account of the process by Professor David Newman, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Ben Gurion University]

**Ben-Gurion University of the Negev
Prof. Rivka Carmi**

September 19, 2012

Dear Fellow Members of the Israeli Academic and Research Community,

I am writing you in my capacity as the President of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev and as the head of the Israeli University Presidents' Forum.

Something unprecedented has recently occurred in Israeli academia. For the first time, the Council of Higher Education's sub-committee for overseeing and evaluating teaching quality has recommended that a department—in this case the Department of Politics and Government at Ben-Gurion University—not be allowed to open student registration for the 2013-14 academic year. For all intents and purposes, this is a decision to close down a university department in Israel. This extreme decision was reached not due to any unusual incident or a severe act, or because demands made by the Council of Higher Education were not met. Thus, the following description should worry everyone who cares about Israeli academia.

Over a year ago, the Council of Higher Education appointed an international evaluation committee that was responsible for assessing political science departments in Israel. As you know, these kinds of evaluations are routine, and the Council of Higher Education carries out these assessments on a regular basis in order to evaluate academic departments in all universities. The aforementioned report included criticism of all the political science departments in Israel.

As part of its work, the evaluation committee recommended in the report submitted to the Council of Higher Education that the Department of Politics and Government implement a series of changes. The most significant recommendations involved increasing the number of faculty members in the department and expanding its curriculum so as to cover more core courses within the discipline. Responding to these recommendations, the university, in close cooperation with the department, the Council of Higher Education, and two members of the international evaluation committee who had been appointed by the Council of Higher Education to oversee the next stages of the process, hired three new faculty members and updated the department's curriculum. These changes, which were made in record time, were consistent with the recommendations of the Council of Higher Education's evaluation committee and elicited a positive written response from the two international members who had been appointed to oversee the implementation of the recommendations.

In light of these developments, we were astonished to discover that the Council of Higher Education's sub-committee discussed the same issue once again and published a new decision, extreme in its severity, which is totally at odds with the evaluation written by the two international members who had been appointed to oversee the process.

Just as had happened with the first professional report over a year ago, the sub-committee's decision was also leaked to the press even before the university's top administrators had been apprised of the meeting's results. I am sure you remember the public discussion and the accusations waged against the university as a result of that initial leak to the press. We are currently experiencing the repercussions of the second leak.

As people deeply committed to academic freedom, we have been watching the Council of Higher Education's recent move with dread and apprehension, but we are also determined to fight this resolution. The sub-committee's decision was reached without any factual base to back it up; it is unreasonable and disproportional, and, most importantly, it does not in any way reflect the opinion of the international committee which oversaw the process. We therefore wonder what is actually behind this decision.

This struggle is not only about Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, but rather it is a struggle of

the entire Israeli academic community. Just the routine leaking to the press of ostensibly academic decisions serves as a warning sign. The approval of this decision by the Council of Higher Education [expected in October] will constitute a devastating blow to academic independence in Israel.

At a time when we are witnessing increasing threats to Israeli academia from abroad and from within, I ask for your help and support in warding off these dangerous developments that are unfolding before our eyes.

Sincerely,
Prof. Rivka Carmi
President

The letter to Israel's Minister for Education

Dear Gideon Sa'ar

We are writing as academics to express our grave concern about the moves, initiated by Israel's Council of Higher Education, to close down the Department of Politics and Government at Ben-Gurion University, by preventing it from registering students from the start of the next academic year.

This attack on the Department quite transparently has nothing to do with the quality of its staff, or of their teaching or research. It has everything to do with the fact that some of them have publicly taken brave and locally unpopular political positions.

The manoeuvres undertaken to try to bring this closure about already bring discredit on the governance of the Israeli higher education system. Should they be successful in closing the Department, it will be a permanent stain on the reputation of Israel's universities.

As Professor Rivka Carmi, President of Ben-Gurion University, has written, the politically motivated closure of the Department "will constitute a devastating blow to academic independence in Israel".

We call upon the Council of Higher Education to reject the recommendation of its Sub-Committee.

(signed etc)

The PACBI Column

On Music, Politics and Ethical Responsibility

Earlier in September, in the lead up to a performance by the Red Hot Chili Peppers in apartheid Israel, a

worldwide campaign calling on them to cancel their show gathered steam. Over the last several months, our South African, Lebanese, Indian, American, Israeli, and Italian partners, among others, had all written letters to RHCP, and a petition was set up that garnered over 7500 signatures [1], a first of its kind.

In Lebanon, days before their show, the famous band, Mashrou3 Leila, announced that it would be opening for RHCP and a huge online debate spurred about the ethics of such a show in light of RHCP performing in Israel a few days later. One of the most salient arguments used against those who were calling for Mashrou3 Leila to cancel, as well as against those calling on RHCP to boycott Israel, was that music should be separate from politics, indeed "above" politics. This argument is based on various taken-for-granted claims, the most frequently repeated of which are: Music has nothing to do with politics; music should build bridges and peace not fall prey to conflict; music is about bringing smiles and human compassion to an audience; and a musical performance is not a political act. All artists who have crossed the cultural boycott "picket line," whether in the South African or Palestinian context, have resorted to a similar logic to justify their acts of complicity. Let us consider why in the context of Israel's colonialism, occupation and apartheid the notion that music and art are above politics rings hollow.

Since its inception Israel has taken great pains to destroy or inhibit the development of Palestinian culture and to target Palestinians who chose cultural production as their method of resistance. For decades, Israeli leaders routinely proclaimed that Palestine didn't exist as a nation, and Israeli authorities and complicit institutions attempted to destroy or confiscate indigenous Palestinian culture, heritage, tradition, history and identity, if not explicitly then through convoluted schemes and arbitrary laws. For example, flight attendants on board Israel's airlines El-Al were issued Palestinian embroidered costumes; the golden Dome of the Rock was prominently featured on Israeli travel brochures; hummus and falafel were served as traditional "Israeli cuisine;" a myriad of Arab and Palestinian slang expressions entered the Israeli lexicon and the colours of the Palestinian flag were banned in any shape, form or combination, even on paintings. Any assertion of Palestinian identity was punished. Efforts by a leading Palestinian dance company, El-Funoun, to portray the roots of

traditional Arab-Palestinian dance and song were considered a dangerous form of subversion and punished accordingly. Clandestine dance rehearsals were not uncommon for El-Funoun dancers at times of military crackdowns.

Palestinian artists in the occupied and besieged West Bank and Gaza live under the constant threat of having their exhibitions ransacked, art galleries destroyed or concerts cancelled. They, like all Palestinians under occupation, are also denied their most basic rights, including their right to freedom of movement which is restricted through a complex web of Israeli military checkpoints, illegal colonies and the apartheid wall. Certainly no exemption is made for artists: they are not separated from this political reality.

The Israeli state certainly does not see music or cultural production as above politics. A former deputy director general of the Israeli foreign ministry, Nissim Ben-Sheetrit, explained upon launching the Brand Israel campaign in 2005: “We are seeing culture as a *hasbara* [propaganda] tool of the first rank, and I do not differentiate between *hasbara* and culture” [2].

In the case of Red Hot Chilli Peppers and Mashrou3 Leila, advocates of BDS were appealing to both groups specifically because they do not want to see their art used as a tool of *hasbara* or acting to normalize Israel’s image. Importantly, they were seen as musicians who had identified and sang about social and political change, and it was therefore assumed that they would want to take a clear stand opposing Israel’s violations of international law.

Mashrou3 Leila in particular, has sung about political issues in the Arab world and about revolution. Thus, it was surprising when some argued that Mashrou3 Leila’s music should be ‘above politics’ although their participation in the RHCP concert, when the latter were due to perform in Tel Aviv a couple of days later, would in itself be a political statement.

The reality of the situation is that Lebanon continues to be a country where hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees reside and are denied their right to return home. Moreover, Israel is still occupying Lebanese territory. To open for a band that will be travelling to the very place those refugees are denied access to and will be entertaining a state that is still occupying Lebanese land would be making a

political statement, a very damaging one. It would also send a signal that those who break the boycott may continue to profit from Arab markets, and their trips to Israel would be considered normal. It is for this reason that we reiterate, once again, our admiration for Mashrou3 Leila for their cancellation.

Mashrou3 Leila’s position is fundamentally different than musicians and artists who pay lip service to an *abstract* notion of peace, without qualifying it to make it dependent on the realization of justice and rights. These musicians, although claiming to be neutral and above politics, are in reality engaging in a specific politics and lending their art to upholding the oppressive status quo, rather than challenging it. To the oppressed, no peace is worth its name if not associated with justice and human rights. Ignoring violations of those rights and undermining popular struggles to regain them suggests that the musician’s call for peace was simply the proper thing to say to appeal to fans of almost all convictions, and motivated more by self-interest than any desire towards building a better, more dignified future for people.

Other artists steer away from political and social issues altogether and present their music as *l’art pour l’art* (art for art’s sake). This may include, for example, those whose music contains no lyrics, or abstract or “neutral” lyrics that cannot normally be construed as carrying any political or social thought. Although in the debates around the RHCP and Mashrou3 Leila concerts this was not the issue, we wish to take the example of such musicians to explain why, beyond the lyrics and choice of political topics of musicians, music remains deeply related to politics.

In all the above cases, musicians are of this world.

In the current context of mass protests globally calling for true democracy, as well as social and economic justice, it is misleading, even harmful, to position music and art above politics. Indeed, artists like the rest of humanity, are influenced by the world around them and, perhaps more than others, may have a relatively significant impact on it.

When they choose to take their music beyond the private confines of their homes and perform in the public sphere they have a *responsibility* to their publics. A basic component of this responsibility is to make sure that their art is not used to sugarcoat

oppression, that their performances are not supported -- and therefore prone to be used -- by states, corporations or organizations that are responsible for violating international law or human rights. Thus, if the content of the music or art itself is, arguably, not political, musicians and artists, for their participation in society and public presentations of their work, certainly are political. A musician, who visited South Africa during apartheid, for instance, against the express will of the oppressed majority, was taking a political stance even if all he or she sang about was love and flowers.

Putting aside their lyrics and politics, when RHCP performed in Israel, they were doing so within the context of a colonial conflict, and within a situation where a people struggling against occupation, colonialism and apartheid was calling on them to cancel their show to avoid being complicit in covering up oppression. The Israeli state was using their show, openly and unabashedly, to whitewash its crimes and re-brand itself as a normal, even progressive, state promoting music and culture. Within such a context, RHCP's performance was a political act of collusion in covering up Israel's human rights violations. Boycott bashers in South Africa were viewed exactly the same, as accomplices in perpetuating oppression. It would be understandable, if unethical, had RHCP come out publicly in support of Israel, as Madonna and Elton John had done, but it is disingenuous when they, and other musicians, hide behind the naïve and misleading statement that they don't want to mix music with politics.

Those who attend concerts on the grounds that this is just a fun night of entertainment and that music is not political should keep in mind the role of music, and more importantly, musicians in society, and what goes into organizing a public musical performance. They should also keep in mind that to artists under conditions of sustained oppression, their art, if deeply and creatively reflecting their people's and their own aspirations for freedom, justice and dignity, is inherently perceived as "political." As the late iconic South African singer and anti-apartheid activist Miriam Makeba said:

"Everybody now admits that apartheid was wrong, and all I did was tell the people who wanted to know where I come from how we lived in South Africa. I just told the world the truth. And if my truth then becomes political, I can't do anything about that."
[3]

In calling for a cultural boycott of Israel, which is largely inspired by the cultural boycott of South Africa, Palestinian artists are reminding their colleagues worldwide of their profound moral obligation to do no harm, at the very least; to avoid abetting or providing a cover for the commission of human rights violations; to ensure that their names and art are not used to justify or prolong apartheid, occupation and colonialism. When we ignore the power of music and musicians to cover such crimes by divorcing music from the world in which it is performed, we give these crimes oxygen to last another day.

Notes:

[1] <http://www.change.org/petitions/red-hot-chili-peppers-cancel-your-performance-in-israel>

[2] <http://www.haaretz.com/misc/article-print-page/about-face-1.170267>

[3] <http://www.inspirationalstories.com/quotes/t/miriam-makeba/page/2/>

Campaigners Hail Batsheva BDS Breakthrough - Undermining 'Brand Israel'

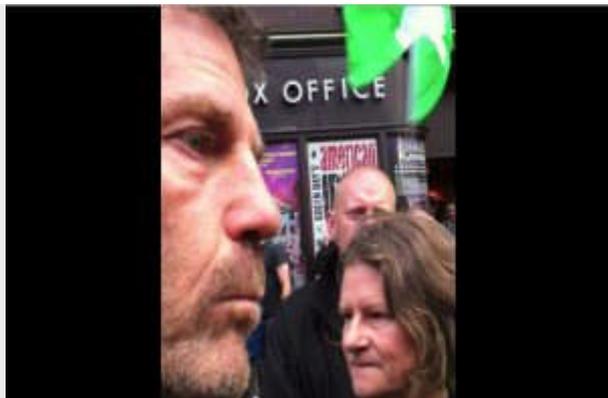
The final days of the 2012 Edinburgh International Festival were marked by exuberant Boycott Israel demonstrations outside the Playhouse theatre and drama within, as world-renowned dance company Batsheva wrestled with the consequences of being promoted by the Israeli state as its cultural ambassador.

Batsheva's three performances of 'Hora', an hour-long work by artistic director Ohad Naharin, on Aug 30-Sept 1, were disturbed by frequent interjections from protestors calling out "Free Palestine" or "Boycott Israeli Apartheid." A mobilisation by a coalition of groups under the umbrella "Don't Dance with Israeli Apartheid" generated vociferous debate in the Scottish media in the preceding weeks and won support from leading cultural figures. See a [full report](#) on the Boycott Israel Network website.

In one of the [video clips](#) recorded during the protests, Naharin - who has been attacked by the Israeli Right for his radical views - can be seen listening gravely and nodding as leading activists explain how significant it would be if Batsheva were to publicly dissociate itself from Brand Israel - a PR project which misuses culture to deflect attention

away from the Occupation and other injustices against the Palestinian people.

Beside him, the company's general manager Dina Aldor is emphatically shaking her head.



Ohad Naharin (left) and Dina Aldor outside Edinburgh's Playhouse on September 1, 2012. Photo: Jon Pullman

The moment highlights the dilemma of artists attempting to engage as people of conscience with injustice in their own societies while being required to act as flag bearers for the entity perpetrating the injustices. This must have been a familiar dilemma for culture professionals during the apartheid era in South Africa. In Edinburgh Naharin sought out boycott activists and told them that his company was not part of Brand Israel; that Batsheva's funding had no political strings attached. He said calling for boycott of an artistic organisation could be legitimate, but "should only take place when the art organization itself collaborates in promoting the situation that is being protested against."

Within the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions ([BDS campaign](#)) initiated by Palestinian civil society, the rationale for targeting elite Israeli cultural institutions is that they are - whether they like it or not - inextricably bound up with Brand Israel, begun by the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2005.

Scottish Jews for a Just Peace, one of the Edinburgh campaign coalition partners, explained the branding idea rather well, quoting Arye Mekel, the ministry's deputy director general for cultural affairs: "We will send well-known novelists and writers overseas, theater companies, exhibits. This way you show Israel's prettier face, so we are not thought of purely in the context of war." Hence the appearance at the Edinburgh Playhouse of both the Israeli ambassador to the UK, Daniel Taub, and culture minister Limor Livnat who [declared](#): "Batsheva Dance Company is one of our flagship cultural institutions".

Friends of Batsheva organisations in the US and Australia invite donations specifically to 'contribute towards a positive image of Israel globally' and 'to support the company in its position as Cultural Ambassadors of Israel on the world stage.'

Batsheva is just one of the institutions enmeshed in the Brand Israel system. Treating any of them as normal merely reassures Israelis and their government that no change is needed. Israel's apologists, while attacking boycott campaigners for sullyng the purity of art with the grime of political action, attempt to explain away Brand Israel by portraying it as no more sinister than British Council garden parties in foreign lands - just a bit of innocent bridge-building. Zionist frontmen/women, such as actress Maureen Lipman, are wheeled out to express astonishment that anyone could wish to limit the freedom of expression of artists out of sheer bigotry, just because they are from Israel. The unsubtle subtext here is that all boycott campaigners are antisemites - even the Jewish ones. Let's set aside the fact that Zionists vigorously pursued their own cultural boycott campaign against Soviet targets in the 1980s, disrupting ballet and orchestral performances in pursuit of their political goal of bringing dissident Soviet Jews to Israel. The freedom of expression people like Lipman claim to uphold is a distant dream for Palestinians.

Palestinian artists face daily humiliation, racist discrimination, checkpoints, strip-searches, legal impediments to what they may or may not address in their work, and direct attacks on cultural facilities and events. The notion of Israeli art building bridges is to most of them laughable, an insult. This emerged clearly during the visit to London in May 2012 of the [Palestinian theatre group ASHTAR](#) and again in recent discussion about Red Hot Chili Peppers' decision to breach the boycott.

Most leading Israeli artists confronted with a clash between culture and conscience (to quote the strapline for the Scottish [Sunday Herald's four-page review](#) of the Batsheva drama) have responded by willingly embracing their cultural ambassador role, like the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, or by pathetically claiming, like theatre director Ilan Ronen, that they have no choice but to perform in the illegal settlements if they want to collect their government subsidy. Batsheva's Ohan Naharin differs from them in that he is on record as criticising successive Israeli governments for allowing the commission of crimes against the Palestinian people. In 2005 he was presented [in a](#)

[Canadian newspaper La Presse](#) as "a pro-Palestinian who strongly opposes the Israeli occupation."

Reports at the time cited sources in the Foreign Ministry attacking Naharin, saying his statements "seriously harm the image of Israel, especially in view of his being an Israel Prize laureate". Naharin was quoted as saying his prize was an award from the citizens of Israel, not from the stewards of the state. But this did not prevent Livnat in Edinburgh, representing the most right-wing government Israel has ever had, proudly embracing Naharin's company Batsheva as a standard bearer for the Israeli state. In correspondence with campaigners Naharin said Israel was very divided. He drew a distinction between the people who abuse power and people who are giving hope, saying "We are the Israelis who belong to growing number of people who can make the difference and bring a change. ... I don't think you are helping the Palestinian cause. You are maybe helping yourself to feel better about the situation... while hurting us."

These arguments are similar to those deployed by Dominic Dromgoole, artistic director of Shakespeare's Globe, when defending its invitation to the Israeli national theatre Habima back in May. Some members of Habima were reported to have signed a pledge not to perform in the illegal settlement town of Ariel. So Dromgoole argued that the company should not be targeted, even though it had staged performances in Ariel's Hall of Culture. Many leading British theatre professionals disagreed and supported a [boycott call](#), making the issue a high-profile talking point in the serious media. PACBI, the [Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel](#), has reiterated many times that BDS action targets only institutions identified with the state. It is not a vehicle for witchhunting individuals. Unfortunately for Batsheva, the flipside of this is that an institution cannot escape being judged complicit by virtue of the views of individuals within it, however influential they may be.

Dance scholar and author Dr Nicholas Rowe, who has extensive experience of working with dance in the occupied Palestinian territories, said that Israeli artists have to make stark choices if they are not to play the part of 'political puppets.' According to [guidelines from PACBI](#), negatively distancing itself from Brand Israel is not enough to exempt an Israeli cultural institution from being targeted. It must end its complicity in Israel's violations of Palestinian rights and international law. This would

mean, at the very least, explicitly renouncing any cultural ambassador role and any funding from bodies that promote Brand Israel.

Cultural boycott is becoming increasingly effective in one of its main aims - to generate a high level of public discussion and awareness of the Palestinian struggle for freedom, justice and equality.

High profile campaigns have targeted the [Israel Philharmonic during the 2011 Proms](#), [Habima at Shakespeare's Globe](#) earlier this year, and now Batsheva. Even [reviewers who chose to focus on the dance](#) and play down the protests could not help but mention them. The company's junior ensemble is scheduled to return to the UK for an eight-city tour in October/November. "Don't Dance with Israeli Apartheid" stands ready to re-enter the fray.

According to Boycott Israel Network co-convenor Hilary Smith: "The tough choice for artists who are sincere in their commitment to justice and self determination for the Palestinians is to refuse to tour, to join [Boycott from Within](#) (an Israeli group supporting boycott, divestment and sanctions) and to work for real change." Achieving change is the desirable goal which will determine decisions to be made about tactics during the forthcoming Batsheva UK tour. Hopefully it will also influence decisions being made in the company's boardroom in Tel Aviv.

Naomi Wimbourne-Idrissi, Coordinator of the BIN Cultural Working Group. Posted on 14/09/2012 on the [jews4big](#) blog at [jews4big.wordpress.com](#)

Notices

Financial support for BRICUP

BRICUP needs your financial support. Arranging meetings and lobbying activities are expensive. We need funds to support visiting speakers, book rooms for public meetings, print leaflets and pay the whole range of expenses that a busy campaign demands.

Please do consider making a donation .

One-off donations may be made by sending a cheque to the Treasurer, at BRICUP, BM BRICUP, London, WC1N 3XX, UK or by making a bank transfer to BRICUP at

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You can [download a standing order form](#).here.
More details can be obtained from
treasurer@bricup.org.uk

Letters to the Editor

Please note that we do have a “Letters to the Editor” facility. We urge you to use it. It provides an opportunity for valuable input from our supporters and gives you the opportunity to contribute to the debate and development of the campaign. Please send letters to arrive on or before the first day of each month for consideration for that month’s newsletter. Aim not to exceed 250 words if possible.

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BRICUP is the British Committee for the Universities of Palestine.

We are always willing to help provide speakers for meetings. All such requests and any comments or suggestions concerning this Newsletter are welcome.

Email them to: newsletter@bricup.org.uk