

While the Israeli Government supports¹ international tours by groups such as the IPO, it frequently² prohibits Palestinian artists from travelling to perform. For example, in August 2016 the Palestine Sings children's chorus was refused permission by Israeli authorities to leave Gaza to perform in the Palestine Choral Festival in the West Bank.³

Gada Nofal, a 14-year-old singer in the choir said "I've never visited the West Bank. ... Seeing Jerusalem, Jenin, Bethlehem, Ramallah for the first time is more than a dream for me, especially since I was going to sing on a national stage for the first time."

For more information:

caiaweb.org

adalahny.org

<https://bdsmovement.net/cultural-boycott>

¹ The IPO receives 9 million shekels out of a total budget of 75 million shekels from the Ministry of Culture and Sport. Haaretz Dec 26, 2014
<https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/culture/theater/.premium-1.631990>

² <https://adalahny.org/campaign-main-document/959/attacks-palestinian-cultural-workers-rights>

³ <http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/we-just-want-sing-love-gaza-artists-not-allowed-leave-strip-893007109>



Welcomes you to our "Brand Israel" event featuring:



**THE ISRAEL
PHILHARMONIC
ORCHESTRA**

MUSIC DIRECTOR: ZUBIN MEHTA

Supported by

משרד התרבות והספורט

Ministry of Culture and Sport

وزارة الثقافة والرياضة



WHY WE ARE PROTESTING THE ISRAEL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA (IPO) PERFORMANCE

Toronto, Saturday, October 28, 2017 8:00pm

According to its website⁴ the IPO acts as a cultural ambassador with a mandate to “represent the state of Israel across the world”. The American Friends of the IPO⁵ calls the IPO “the preeminent cultural ambassador for the State of Israel” and says that “the goodwill created by these tours ... is of enormous value to the State of Israel.”

This cynical use of art and music serves Israel’s Brand Israel strategy which aims to cover up Israel’s occupation and apartheid policies using art and culture.

According to Arye Mekel of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign 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.”⁶

The reality behind the image that ‘Brand Israel’ attempts to create is a state that violates the human rights and property rights of the Palestinian people as an inevitable result of implementing its policies of occupation, colonization, apartheid and siege. In the summer of 2014, in their 7 week long bombing and invasion of Gaza, the Israeli military killed 2,251 Palestinians, including 551 children and injured 11,231. Of those injured, 10 percent suffer permanent disability.⁷

The IPO is not an apolitical cultural institution. It has not distanced itself from Brand Israel efforts, or official Israeli policies. It continues in its role as an ambassador for Israel, whitewashing its crimes and effectively giving a greenlight for these oppressive policies to continue.

“Let’s not pretend that music is a single, universal language (it is not) that magically generates rainbow bridges surpassing social and political and economic entanglements --- rather, let’s directly confront the Israeli state’s violent project of appropriation and erasure using the IPO as its instrument.”⁸

For these reasons we join the many human rights groups, cultural organisations, artists and individuals of conscience who have protested or called for the boycott of the IPO

The Palestinian Boycott Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement, which is supported by the majority of Palestinian civil society, supports boycotts and protests of the IPO because of it’s complicity in covering up Israel’s egregious human rights violations against the Palestinian people.

In a recent interview Dr. Ruchama Marton Founder and President of Physicians for Human Rights – Israel (PHRI) stated *“I’m talking to you after 30 or maybe 50 years of fighting the occupation. We need outside help. And I’m talking mainly about one thing: BDS.”*⁹

⁴ Ways to support the Orchestra <https://www.ipo.co.il/en/>

⁵ <http://afipo.org/>

⁶ http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/19/world/middleeast/19israel.html?_r=2&partner=rss&emc=rss

⁷ <http://gaza.ochaopt.org/2015/06/key-figures-on-the-2014-hostilities/>

⁸ Thai classical musician Sainatee Suárez speaking at IPO protest in NY on 25 October, 2017. <https://adalahny.org/press-release/1510/new-yorkers-protest-orchestra-covers-israeli-apartheid>

⁹ <https://bdsmovement.net/news/distinguished-israeli-doctor-supports-bds>