

Roger Waters, founder of Pink Floyd, on the cultural boycott:

*"Where governments refuse to act, people must, with whatever peaceful means are at their disposal. For me this means declaring an intention to stand in solidarity, not only with the people of Palestine but also with the many thousands of Israelis who disagree with their government's policies, by*



*joining the campaign of Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions against Israel. This is a plea to my colleagues in the music industry, and also to artists in other disciplines, to join this cultural boycott."*

Roger Waters spraying "No Thought Control" on Israeli Wall in Bethlehem.

*"As a human rights activist, I identify with the cultural boycott of Israel."*

Cassandra Wilson, on cancelling her upcoming concert in Israel.



In November 2010, South African Artists Against Apartheid issued their founding declaration, which stated:

*"As artists of conscience we can act to resist the normalization of Israel's apartheid policies. Some may hide behind the excuse that art is apolitical. However, artists have not been hesitant in taking a position against racism and inequality. As South Africans we benefitted from such a position of conscience."*

**ADALAH - NY:**

The New York Campaign for the Boycott of Israel

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## THE BAT SHEVA DANCE COMPANY



### **Cultural Ambassadors for Israel**

*"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."*

*-- Arye Mekel, Israel Foreign Ministry spokesperson*

# WHY ARE WE PROTESTING BATSHEVA DANCE COMPANY?

We are New York City-based human rights activists and artists supporting the struggle for justice, human rights, equality and democracy in Israel and Palestine.

As residents of New York City, including Brooklyn, we appreciate the Brooklyn Academy of Music's (BAM) history as a progressive arts institution. We know that BAM supports diversity, equal rights, environmental consciousness and grassroots community action.

However, from March 7-10, BAM is hosting the Batsheva dance company.

## Batsheva Whitewashes Israel's Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine

*Batsheva is not an apolitical dance company.* This is especially true since it is being exploited to cover up wholesale state-sponsored inequality and discrimination. The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs refers to Batsheva as "the best known global ambassador of Israeli culture." Batsheva receives funding from the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) – funding designed to divert attention from Israel's violations of human rights.



Demonstration at October 2010 performance

Batsheva's tour is part of the "Brand Israel" initiative designed to distract from the facts, including:

- Israel's ongoing occupation of Palestinian lands
- Israel's 223 Jewish-only settlements and "outposts" built on Palestinian land in violation of international law

- Israel's "Apartheid" wall in the West Bank that confiscates Palestinian land, also in violation of international law according to the International Court of Justice
- Israel's demolition of over 24,000 Palestinian homes since 1967
- Israel's many laws that discriminate against Palestinian of Israel, "legalizing" their status as second-class citizens

Hana Awwad, who spent years performing with one of the premier Palestinian troupes dance, El Funoun, explained to Adalah-NY,

*"As a Palestinian dancer based in the West Bank, I am prohibited by the Israeli government from traveling to Gaza for performances. After Israel's 2008 military assault on Gaza, our Ramallah-based dance troupe resorted to performing for our people in Gaza via a satellite link. Some of our dancers are prohibited by the Israeli government from ever accompanying the troupe when it performs in neighboring Palestinian cities and abroad."*

In 2005, Palestinian civil society organizations issued a call, modeled on the call for the boycott of apartheid South Africa, for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) against Israeli institutions until Israel ceases its violations of Palestinian rights and respects international law.

It is inappropriate for BAM, with its progressive history, to host



Batsheva, a cultural ambassador of Israeli apartheid. Artists of conscience are taking a stand, including a growing number of musicians such as Elvis Costello, Carlos Santana, the Pixies, Cassandra Wilson and the late Gil Scott-Heron, who have refused to play concerts in Israel.

**That's why we are here tonight to protest Batsheva's performance.**

**Tell BAM's President, Karen Hopkins, ([khopkins@BAM.org](mailto:khopkins@BAM.org)) that until Israel complies with international law and respects Palestinian human rights, BAM should not book performances that are part of "Brand Israel".**