

Outrage as London cinema showing October 7 film defaced by protesters

This evening the Phoenix cinema in East Finchley will be showing the documentary Supernova – the Music Festival Massacre as part of the Seret film festival. According to local newspaper the [Ham and High](#) The international film festival, which started 13 years ago, runs from May 16 to 23 with a mission to “promote Israeli culture through cinema”.

According to the group, Phoenix Cinema in East Finchley, Everyman Cinemas Hampstead and Barnet, and JW3 will host the festival.

In its statement calling for these cinemas to boycott Seret, Artists for Palestine UK claimed that the festival was part of Israel’s “broader artwashing strategy” to cover up “crimes against the Palestinian people”.

According to the group, Picturehouse and Curzon cinemas have already pulled screenings of the festival.

Odelia Haroush, co-founder of Seret told *Ham and High* that she had no doubt the festival would be a “success”, despite calls for a boycott. She said: “Most of our screenings are sold out already. I do not see a point to cancel culture. Through the films you can see all the diversity within the Israeli society, and a lot of the filmmakers are criticising Israel as well.” She added that the films were chosen for their “artistic quality”, and not for their politics.

However last night the [usual suspects were massing](#), calling for action outside the cinema tonight.

Signal Messenger Group

Follow this link to join a group on Signal Messenger.

signal.group

Phoenix Cinema - No to Art Washing Genocide!

Numbers needed!!

7pm, Thurs 23rd May

Phoenix Cinema, East Finchley

Join us for a protest outside an Israeli government funded screening of propaganda documentary 'Supernova'.

Activists claimed that well-known and left leaning film makers Mike Leigh and Ken Loach had resigned as patrons of the Phoenix cinema and while I couldn't find confirmation last night, the [Guardian](#) has cooberation of the claim.

Ken Loach and Mike Leigh have resigned as patrons of the Phoenix cinema in London in protest over the venue hosting an Israeli state-sponsored film festival. But pro-Palestine solidarity groups, as well as the Phoenix cinema's front of house staff and managers, have called on the venue's directors and trustees to cancel the screening over the festival's links to the Israeli culture ministry and the Israeli embassy in the UK.

Loach and Leigh both independently confirmed to the Guardian that they had resigned as patrons of the cinema

This morning the north London cinema was covered in red graffiti that read: "Say no to artwashing", and protests and counter-protests are expected there this evening.

And the [Jewish Chronicle](#) has details of this more recent vandalism.

"Say no to artwashing" in large red lettering was found graffitied across the front of the much-loved Phoenix Cinema in East Finchley, north London, this morning. The iconic signage had also been splattered with red paint.



The Phoenix Cinema was graffitied by anti-Israel protesters ahead of a screening of a documentary on the October 7 massacres

By 9am, cleaners from Barnet Council were removing the paint but said that they did not have the correct products to clean the sign.

Odelia Haroush, one of the founders and the CEO of the Seret Israeli film festival, which is hosting tonight's screening of *Supernova – the Music Festival Massacre*, told the *JC*: "What they have written is awful, and it's so not true. On the contrary to artwashing, we are showing what really happened on October 7. We are showing a documentary film. The world should

know about the horrors. . . I'm totally against cancelling culture. If the other side has something to say, they can make a film and screen it."

Outside the cinema, passers-by, both Jewish and non-Jewish, stopped to take photos, voicing their shock at the graffiti. Local resident Jules Goldberg said: "It's a very violent act for people who claim to oppose violence."

Another Jewish local, who asked to remain anonymous, said: "It's horrific. It feels very much on my doorstep. My kids go to school in Hampstead, and I saw protests outside the Everyman cinema at the weekend, so it just feels like it is everywhere – home, school, life, in town. London just doesn't feel like the place it should be."

From one Londoner to another, he's not wrong

Protests and counter-protests are expected to take place outside the cinema before this evening's screening.