

Israelis told to leave festival show by comedian who labelled Israel 'abusive'

I posted this incident from the Review below. Now it is a news story [here.](#)

From the [Telegraph](#)

Sunday night's performance by American stand-up Reginald D Hunter of his new Edinburgh Festival set ranks without doubt as the most unpleasant comedy gig I've ever attended. This came down to five minutes midway in when a theatre full of people erupted in vocal animosity at an Israeli couple who had briefly heckled Hunter.



Reginald D Hunter in 2021 | CREDIT: David Bagnall / Alamy Stock Photo

Hunter, 55, had made a crude point, rather than an especially sophisticated gag, where he said a Channel 5 documentary containing a scene about an abusive wife herself accusing her husband of abuse made him think, "My God, it's like being married to Israel." There was audience laughter in response, but not from the couple on the front row, who shouted "not funny".

The pair, who said they were from Israel, then endured their fellow audience-members shouting expletives ("f- off" among them), and telling them to go – with slow-hand claps, boos and cries of "genocidal maniac", "you're not welcome" and "free

Palestine” part of the toxic mix.

But here he gave an object lesson in how not to pick on people in the front row. Instead of tolerating the couple’s joint heckle, he doubled-down with a sinister air of beaming bellicosity: “I’ve been waiting for you all summer, where the f– you been?” He continued: “You can say it’s not funny to you, but if you say it to a room full of people who laughed, you look foolish.”

“Look at you making everyone love Israel even more,” he jeered, after the woman remonstrated with the audience.

“That tells me that I still got voltage,” he purred, with satisfaction, after the pair left, slowly (it turned out that the man was disabled, not that this caused a flicker of restraint in the host, who openly laughed at them). He then related a remark that his female partner had made at the time of the Holocaust controversy about accessing the Jewish Chronicle’s website: “Typical f–ing Jews, they won’t tell you anything unless you subscribe.” “It’s just a joke,” he added.

Witnesses reported that the gag was met with laughter from the audience.

In the past I’ve had time for Hunter, a free-thinking outsider, who has lived in the UK since 1997. . . amid typically laid-back ruminations on the riots, Trump . . . But if countenancing a mob mentality and purveying an anti-Semitic trope is what passes for edgy in his book, then I’ve had my fill.

The Assembly Festival, which runs the venue where the incident took place, stated: “We are aware of an audience member choosing to leave Reginald D Hunter’s performance on Sunday Aug 11. “The venue front of house team attended and supported the member of the public upon exiting.”

Hunter has been contacted for comment.