



IMPORTANT MESSAGE: Boy George

Israelis need to see me, says Boy George

POP icon Boy George has no time for those who demand he and his band, Culture Club, boycott Israel.

The flamboyant singer told Israel's Channel 2 TV station: "I am about something really positive and something alternative and I want to play to my fans wherever they are."

"Sometimes being true to who you are is the most political thing you can ever do."

"We have to be really careful with the internet because people say everyone is talking — it's like five people, they're retweeting each other — and that doesn't constitute a revolution."

Boy George was speaking ahead

of Culture Club's concert in Tel Aviv on November 7.

He last visited Israel in 2014, when he took part in the opening events of Gay Pride Week in Eilat.

He first performed in Israel with Culture Club in 1985 and solo in 2010.

His performance next month is part of a reunion tour with Culture Club, whose drummer, Jon Moss, is Jewish.

George also said that he "got a wonderful reception in Israel, so it was clear to me I'd be back".

And he added that, that while he gets a "few tweets" against him every time he visits the Jewish state, he stated: "I think our

message today is more important than any other time — people in Israel need to see me."

Meanwhile, British musician Alan Parsons said he was proud to be taking part in an anti-BDS event on Sunday in California.

Parsons will join *The Big Lebowski* actor Mark Pellegrino, *Airplane* and *Scary Movie* writer David Zucker and Israeli musician Guy Erez on a panel at a Los Angeles synagogue.

The Alan Parsons Project will play Israel four days after Culture Club, just two years after their last performance in the Jewish state.

Parsons has slammed anti-Zionist Roger Waters' demands for

a cultural boycott of Israel.

He said: "It's totally censorship, yeah. I mean, people who follow it would be considered succumbing to censorship."

"But we didn't — we said we want to do this."

"The language of music has nothing to do with the language of politics."

"I have no aspiration towards political statements contrary to what certain musicians do."

Ironically, Londoner Parsons is credited as an important contributor to Waters' band Pink Floyd's seminal album, *The Dark Side of the Moon*.

Fictional film so close to truth for Hungarian Jews

BY CNAAN LIPSHIZ

THE time is just after the defeat of Nazi Germany. Two Orthodox Jews disembark from a train at a rural station in Soviet-occupied Hungary and, after offloading a heavy bag, they begin a silent, hour-long walk to a nearby village.

The purpose of their journey is not known. But their arrival in the village sets in motion a series of tragic and violent events, as some residents worry the visitors will expose crimes they committed during the Nazi occupation, with potentially deadly consequences for the perpetrators.

Such is the premise of the award-winning Hungarian film *1945*. The black-and-white feature, filmed last year, is one of just a

This element of the Holocaust remained taboo

handful of films produced in Hungary about the theft of Jewish property during the Holocaust.

Despite being a low-cost production lacking marquee names, *1945* has found major success at international film festivals.

It won awards at the San Francisco Film Critics Circle as well as at the Berlin Film Festival and the Jerusalem Film Festival.

And while the film is fictional, it has struck a nerve among Hungarian Jews whose families lived through the suspicion and hostility depicted.

"It is an important production which, despite being fictional, nonetheless describes for the first time in film the reality of what actually happened to us," said Peter Feldmajer, a former leader of Hungary's Jewish federation.

In the film, the two silent Jews — Sámuel Hermann and his son —



STRUCK A NERVE: A scene from acclaimed Hungarian film *1945*

arrive on a summer day: the wedding day of a son of the village's de facto mayor.

Fearful that the Jewish arrivals are an expeditionary force for Jews who used to own property there, the town's leader frantically mounts cover-ups of his own crimes.

A group of villagers armed with pitchforks gather around the newcomers as they pray for their dead in the village's disused Jewish cemetery.

The scene is a reference to the 1946 antisemitic pogrom in the city of Miskolc, during which two Jews, including one police officer, were murdered by participants of what began as a workers' demonstration and escalated into a lynching.

"This scene accurately and bravely represents why it was impossible for Jews to seek justice in the post-war period," said Feldmajer, whose father was a Holocaust survivor from a Hungarian village where locals stole his family's property.

Robert Frolich, the rabbi of Budapest's main synagogue, praised the filmmakers for depicting the threat of violence rather than its use, which was unusual.

"The pogroms happened here and there," he said. "But the fear of having to give back the property, the shame of what was done to Jews — even if only by not defending them — that was

common, that was the rule, and this is the first film that I'm aware of capturing this."

"This element of the Holocaust — the neighbours, the shop owners who took everything the Jews had and didn't want to give it back — that has remained a taboo, which this film helps break."

After the fall of communism, the Hungarian government instituted several laws that were supposed to facilitate restitution claims for property privately owned by Jews.

But the procedure put in place "made it difficult for

many potential claimants" to receive compensation, according to the World Jewish Restitution Organisation, citing the laws' narrow definition of an heir along with foot dragging by justice authorities.

These problems were partially addressed in restitution for heirless property. But it did not address the problem of individuals who tried, but could not receive compensation for artifacts and real estate stolen from their families in Hungary, where more than half of the pre-war Jewish population of 825,000 was murdered.

The film also tackles how neighbours, who used to be friendly, turned on their Jewish compatriots while under the rule of Nazis and their allies.

In many instances, this was done not out of ideological hatred, but in order to survive their new circumstances or make the most out of them.

At the same time, the film also acknowledges those who kept valuables for Jewish neighbours and who despised the looting by other non-Jews.

"Mostly it gives us an idea for the first time of how they felt, the Jews and the non-Jews, in those chaotic days after the Second World War," Frolich said.

Trailer: youtu.be/fWmOuu_zun8



Tambor is honoured

TRANSPARENT star Jeffrey Tambor, pictured above, will be awarded the 2017 IFF Achievement in Television Award at the 31st Israel Film Festival on November 5 in Beverly Hills.

The IFF Cinematic Achievement Award will go to Israeli film star Lior Ashkenazi, winner of this year's Ophir Award as best actor for his work in *Foxtrof*.

The IFF will also present the second-season premieres of Israeli TV shows *Fauda* and *Mossad 101*.

Simone is excited

LISA Simone, Nina Simone's daughter, will be performing in Tel Aviv and Herzliya next month.

She said: "I'm mostly looking forward to breathing the air and seeing for my own self what the reality is. I am excited to walk on the earth and connect with the people's energies, and hopefully start a new relationship with that region."



Sage words for Chanukah

JEWISH singers have become famous for their Christmas albums.

Barbra Streisand, Neil Diamond and Barry Manilow are just three who have released albums of festive songs.

But award-winning singer-songwriter Rachael Sage, pictured, is bucking the trend by releasing an EP featuring Chanukah songs.

Rachael, whose songs feature heavily in hit TV show *Dance Moms*, is releasing *Joy!* on November 10.

The lead track is a cover of *Joy To The World*.

But she has also written two Chanukah songs . . . and a Yiddish ballad.

The tongue-in-cheek *Tchatchkes & Latkes* was penned for her annual holiday show at New York City's Joe's Pub, while *Hanukkah In The Village* is already a fans' favourite.

Yiddish song *Umrú Meine* was debuted earlier this year at a National Yiddish Theatre gala event, where Rachael sang it alongside Tovah Feldshuh, David Hyde Pierce and other Broadway performers.

And the EP packaging also includes a recipe for Romanian latkes, contributed by a grandmother of one of Rachael's friends.

Trailer: youtu.be/fWmOuu_zun8
rachaelsage.com