# Jonny Greenwood cancels UK shows over credible threats linked to pro-Palestinian campaigners



Jonny Greenwood, the renowned guitarist and keyboardist of Radiohead, has announced the cancellation of his upcoming UK performances due to what he described as “credible threats” arising from pro-Palestinian campaigners. Greenwood, who has collaborated with Israeli-born musician Dudu Tassa, was set to perform at venues including the Bristol Beacon's Lantern Hall and London's Hackney Church in June. Their collaborative album, *Jarak Qaribak*, was released in 2023.

A spokesperson for the Metropolitan Police stated that they had not received any formal reports regarding threats related to the concerts and indicated that inquiries would be conducted with the venue.

The Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (Pacbi), part of the broader Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement, welcomed the cancellation. The group had been vocal in advocating for the events to be called off, asserting that the performances would have "whitewashed" the ongoing conflict in the Gaza Strip. Members of Pacbi contested Greenwood and Tassa's claims regarding the threats, labelling them as “unsubstantiated” and alleging that the musicians were attempting to distract from their ties to Israel’s cultural landscape.

In a letter issued on behalf of Greenwood, Tassa, and their music ensemble, the artists expressed that the venues and their staff had received enough credible threats to deem the events unsafe. They stated, "Promoters of the shows can’t be expected to fund our, or our audience’s, protection." The letter further commented on the implications of the cancellation, suggesting it would be viewed as a triumph by campaigners, while they found no cause for celebration, describing the situation as a form of censorship.

The letter articulated their belief that art transcends political divides, arguing that efforts to promote cross-border artistic collaboration in the Middle East should be supported rather than condemned. They stressed that artists should be free to express their creativity independent of the political affiliations or actions of their governments. The ensemble included singers from various Arab nations, united by a shared passion for Arabic music.

In their communication, Greenwood and Tassa addressed the political spectrum's reactions to their music, expressing disappointment at being criticised by both ends. They noted: "For some on the right, we’re playing the 'wrong' kind of music – too inclusive, too aware of the rich and beautiful diversity of Middle Eastern culture. For some on the left, we’re only playing it to absolve ourselves of our collective sins."

In light of these events, they expressed solidarity with fellow artists, such as the Northern Irish rap trio Kneecap, who have faced scrutiny for controversial remarks. The trio has been investigated by counter-terrorism officials following allegations of inflammatory statements made in their performances.

The Diocese of London confirmed that Hackney Church was informed of the cancellation last Friday, instructing the venue to issue refunds to ticket holders.

A Pacbi spokeswoman accused Greenwood and Tassa of diverging attention from what they termed ongoing complicity with Israel’s cultural establishment through “unsubstantiated claims,” asserting that their activism was peaceful. The organisation reiterated support from tens of thousands of artists and cultural workers for the cultural boycott against Israel, a movement initiated over two decades ago.

Both Bristol Beacon and Avon and Somerset Police have been approached for comment on the circumstances surrounding the cancellation.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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