

Artists from Los Angeles to Santiago to Dhaka: Mounting horror over Israeli mass murder in Gaza

David Walsh
13 November 2023

The mass homicidal campaign being waged by the Israeli military against the defenseless Gazan population, urged on by the Biden government and its accomplices in London, Paris, Berlin and elsewhere, will live in infamy. From now on, for a vast portion of humanity, the names of Netanyahu, Biden, Blinken, Macron, Sunak, Scholz and the other criminals can evoke only hatred and disgust.

A broad radicalization is taking place, in which the horrifying atrocities in Gaza serve as a catalyst, a propellant. Millions and millions will rapidly come to realize that in fact they despise everything about capitalism.

The artists have a responsibility here, to stand up for the oppressed and the victimized, against imperialist barbarism. The list of musicians, actors and others opposing Israel's campaign of death is too extensive to include in one article. The WSWs will continue to cover this aspect of the present crisis.

On Sunday in Los Angeles, 19-year-old rapper Redveil (Marcus Morton) movingly led thousands of young people to chant "Free Palestine!" at the Camp Flog Gnaw Carnival musical festival, founded by rapper and record producer Tyler the Creator.

Pointing to a rapidly scrolling list of names on a giant screen, Redveil told the audience, "Behind me is a list of names of Palestinians that's been killed in Gaza since October 7. Nobody on this list made it to the age of four. Not one." The rapper directed his youthful listeners to the website ceasefiretoday.com, before leading them in the chant of "Free Palestine!"

Rapper Kid Cudi (Scott Ramon Seguro Mescudi) expressed his sympathy for Palestinian civilians caught in the middle of war. Referring to the growing total of

Palestinian casualties, Cudi commented on Instagram, "I can't imagine the pain people are feeling ... Seeing their entire neighborhoods bombed, losing generations of family members, parents crying over their children's lifeless bodies, communities turning into mass graves, people digging through rubble of their homes in hopes of finding remains of their loved ones."

The Cleveland-born rapper indicated he may push back the release of his upcoming album, because "it doesn't feel right to share the music I have coming out and pretend like there isn't a part of the world burning, thousands of people [are] being murdered." He concluded, "My heart goes out to all my brothers and sisters of all faiths and backgrounds who are suffering. Free Palestine!!"

Rage Against The Machine's Zack De La Rocha skipped the band's induction into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame November 3 and attended the mass march in Washington, D.C. the following day, where he was photographed. According to the *Fader*, guitarist Tom Morello was the only member of Rage Against The Machine to attend the Hall of Fame ceremony. Morello posed with a "CEASEFIRE" sign backstage. "Morello is active on X and has been vocal in calling for Israel to stop its bombing of the Gaza Strip, as well as for Hamas to release the Israeli hostages they took on October 7," *Fader* reported.

Singers Chelsea Wolfe and Björk have expressed their opposition to Israeli violence and aggression. Singer-songwriters Dua Lipa, Devonté Hynes (Blood Orange), Caroline Polachek and Drake are among those who signed the Artists Call For Ceasefire Now open letter calling "for an immediate de-escalation and ceasefire in Gaza and Israel before another life is lost."

Musicians in various parts of the world are speaking out.

Chile has one of the largest populations of Palestinian ancestry outside the Middle East, more than half a million people.

“We’re all subjects of this story,” Chilean rapper and musician Ana Tijoux told Al Jazeera, in regard to the present war. “We all have to stand up.” The publication added that “Tijoux, a Latin Grammy winner, has participated in one of the country’s largest pro-Palestinian rallies to date, a concert to raise funds for the remaining hospitals in Gaza and the West Bank. ... One of the best-selling Spanish-language rappers of all time, Tijoux has even collaborated with the Palestinian British artist Shadia Mansour, with whom she released an Arabic-Spanish protest anthem, 2014’s *Somos Sur*.”

“Why does what is happening in Palestine affect us? It has to do with colonisation, genocide, racism and ethnic cleansing. The same patterns of imperialism repeat,” Tijoux told Al Jazeera. Santiago has been the scene of demonstrations of thousands in support of the Gazan population.

A large group of electronic music DJs and musicians in Britain have signed an open letter speaking out “against Israel’s brutal and ongoing attack on Gaza.” The signatories indicate that they are “troubled to see that most of London’s electronic music venues and collectives have been silent in response to Israel’s horrifying and ongoing violence against the 2.3 million Palestinians in Gaza, with the financial and political support of Western states.”

“We note,” the letter goes on, “that the UK government is a critical supporter and funder of Israel’s bombardment and blockade of Gaza and has repeatedly refused to apply pressure on Israel to respect humanitarian law. This public support makes us as British citizens and residents complicit in the horrific suffering of Palestinians in Gaza.” The more than 250 electronic music figures and groups pledge not to perform in spaces and collectives that “ignore the violence of colonialism while simultaneously profiting from the creativity of musicians and artists from the global South and diaspora communities.”

Jewish musician, conductor and writer Jonathan Ofir has been a vocal critic of Israeli policy. Born in Israel but now living in Denmark, Ofir told Al Jazeera that “Israel claims Jews as its national asset, and it

weaponises us, as Jews—both as bodies in the demographic battle vis-a-vis non-Jews and particularly Palestinians, and ideologically as born representatives of the Jewish state—[and] seeks to do that to Jews worldwide.” That claim, he continued, “makes [us] the human shields of the state, as it assaults Palestinians under its settler-colonialist agenda, be it through ongoing ethnic cleansing, through siege or through seasonal massacres.”

In late October, the Egyptian Union of Artistic Syndicates organized a demonstration to express solidarity with the people of Gaza and invited a number of artists, including writers, directors, photographers, actors, and media figures to speak. Prominent actors Ahmed Abdel Aziz, Abdulaziz Makhyoun and Khaled El-Sawi attended, making statements in support of the Palestinians and denouncing Israeli crimes.

El-Sawi, according to *Daily News Egypt*, argued that in 1973, “the Arab nation supported Egypt in its war against Israel by cutting off oil from the West, which was a major pressure card in favor of the Egyptian army. He wondered why the Arab oil-exporting countries do not do the same now to support the Palestinian people. He hoped that this would happen soon and that everyone would stand with the Palestinians’ right to their land and denounce the Zionist crime against them.”

In what promises to be a significant musical protest, Bangladeshi musicians are preparing a concert “To Gaza from Dhaka” in support of the besieged and beleaguered Gazan population. The organization Artists Against Genocide will stage the concert November 24 at Dhaka University. The *Daily Star* reports that popular singer-songwriter Ahmed Hasan Sunny “informed the media today that ... at least 15 bands and musicians will perform in this concert. Meanwhile, Maqsood O’ Dhaka, Zohad Reza Chowdhury of Nemesis, Karnival, Masha Islam, rapper Shafayat and Aseer Arman have been confirmed as performers so far.”



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact