

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

CONTACT MIKE COHEN
mcohen@jewishtelegraph.com
Tel: 0161 741 2637

Director warns of a coming ME war

BY SIMON YAFFE

ONE doesn't normally link Bob Dylan and Islamic fundamentalism, but film director Joel Gilbert has immersed himself in both topics.

American Joel's new film *Farewell Israel: Bush, Iran and the Revolt of Islam* — which was released on DVD this week — focuses on the rise of Islamists in the Middle East and its imminent danger to the Jewish state.

Joel warned: "There is a coming war in the Middle East, and it will be here soon, a war for Islamic revival."

But the 43-year-old's fascination with Middle East is in stark contrast to his passion for music legend Dylan.

For Joel is in a Dylan tribute band called Highway 61 Revisited, which includes former Dylan band members Scarlet Rivera, Rob Stoner and Winston Watson.

Joel said: "I got interested in Dylan through my production company Highway 61. I produced three documentaries on him."

"He's a fascinating guy, but quite a recluse you know, even his best friends rarely hear from him."

And Joel even used his band's music in *Farewell Israel*.

Los Angeles-based Joel first became interested in the politics of the Middle East when he attended the School of Oriental and African Studies in London.

He studied Islam under renowned Middle East experts such as Eli Kedouri and Abbas Kelidar.

After working as a financial analyst for



FASCINATION WITH DYLAN: Joel Gilbert

Paramount Pictures, he gradually moved up the company ladder and started to write and produce, leading to his move into documentaries.

Joel said: "It is a worrying time for the West and indeed for Muslim countries in the Middle East."

"Islamism is not a war against the West, it is an internal struggle for the revival of Islamic society."

"It is a revolt against their failed secular governments."

Joel points out that there are two places in the region where free elections have been held — Turkey and the Palestinian Authority — and both have elected Islamist governments.

He added: "Islam must

reacquire Palestine to redeem itself from Westernisation and the humiliation of a Jewish state."

"There's a big misunderstanding of Islam by the West and Israel — and that is a big problem."

In *Farewell Israel*, Joel, who also wrote the film, explains the history of Islam, together with Arab attitude towards Israel.

He added: "There is an historic revival in the Islamic world after 300 years of decline."

"The religious Muslims want to uproot what they see as secular, corrupt governments and install a Muslim one which promises equal rights and justice for all its citizens."

"Western peace between Israel and Islam is unattainable, the return of Jews to dhimmi status is something which the Islamists aspire to."

(Dhimmi was the name given to Jews and Christians when they lived under Muslim — such as the Ottoman — governments).

Joel was raised in Oak Ridge, Tennessee — which had just the one synagogue.

He recalled: "I had a strong Jewish upbringing, although there were only about 50 Jewish families where I lived."

"We had to drive on Shabbat because the shul we went to was over the mountains."

And despite a history of antisemitism in the Deep South, Joel never encountered any prejudice while growing up there.

He added: "The non-Jews were really sweet to us, although they did ask us some strange questions, like why weren't baptised or why didn't we go to church — I think it was more ignorance than anything else."

Joel considers himself to be observant.

He explained: "I definitely believe in Judaism and go to shul on the festivals — it is something that is important to me."

Joel has visited Israel many times — he has relatives in Modiin — but is fearful for the Jewish state's future.

He added: "President Mahmoud Abbas is no good for Israel — the Palestinians don't like him, he has no power and is doomed to failure."

"Islamism is on the march and their number one target is Israel."

www.farewellisrael.com/home.html

PEOPLE



CRAIG DAVID: Bullied at school

Craig goes on record to ask for some Trust

SOUL star Craig David was bullied at school for being overweight — because of the Jewish side of his family.

The Southampton-born singer — who released his latest album *Trust Me* (Warner Bros) this week — has a Jewish-English mother and Grenadian father.

The *Sunday Times* claimed that "chocolate is one of David's addictions, a legacy from being a fat bullied child when his Jewish mother and grandmother fed him love in the form of sweets".

His grandmother used to feed him dessert before his supper, then dessert again after.

David's mother, who came from a family who owned a chain of chemists, looked after the youngster after splitting up from his father when he was eight.

David, 26, shot to fame in *Rewind* in 2002. The track, which reached number two, was credited to Artful Dodge with David providing vocals.

His first single, *Fill Me In*, made him the youngest solo male artist ever to reach number one in the UK charts.

His debut album, *Born To Do It*, — which sold almost two million copies — included four hit singles.

The 26-year-old's fourth album, *Trust Me*, features 11 tracks including hit single *Hot Stuff* which samples David Bowie's *Let Dance*.

In 2002 an American radio producer allegedly told him to ditch his white guitarist for a black one to appear more urban.

David replied: "My mum's white, too. Should I sack her as well?"

The producer said that he should cover that up too, to which David said: "You can't cover up my mum. I love her. She's my inspiration. She's a proud Jewish woman and you can't just . . ."

"She's Jewish?" the producer reportedly interrupted. "Who let this kid in here? Back to England with you, son."

Holocaust education film is given BAFTA nod

A HOLOCAUST Education Trust film has been nominated for a BAFTA.

Recollections: Eyewitnesses Remember the Holocaust is on the shortlist in the learning secondary category at this Sunday's Children's BAFTAS.

Four years in development, *Recollections* integrates testimonies

from 18 eyewitnesses to the Holocaust, including Jewish, Roma and Sinti survivors.

It is tailored to the secondary school citizenship curriculum and is the first resource in the UK to focus solely on the interactive use of video history testimony.

Trust chief executive Karen Pollock said: "We are thrilled to see *Recollections* being recognised by BAFTA."

"The film ensures that Holocaust education can continue to engage the next generation of students in the UK, even when survivors are no longer with us."

SHABBATSCRABBLE

There's no need to write down the answers in our Shabbat-friendly crossword. Just spell out the answers with tiles on your Scrabble board.

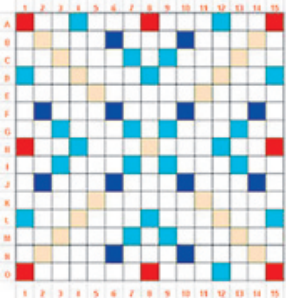
The clues are for the new version of Scrabble which shows the grid reference numbers across the top and bottom. If you have an older board with the references reversed then just find time to stick over your board with the new orientation for numbers/letters. If you don't want to do this, then just treat the across clues as down clues and vice versa. Helpful hint: Before starting sort the tiles alphabetically. If you complete the puzzle, you will have used all 98 tiles — do not use the blanks

ACROSS

- 1F Northern tone confused the weight. (5)
1N Rotund friends on TV. (3)
2L Halfway to the final. (4)
3D Cry at the wall. (4)
5G The way to make a rod. (4)
5J Take a look around. (4)
7A Serve up this ode. (5)
7L Rabid form of plait. (5)
7N Bird on board. (4)
8E Coxed the manuscript. (5)
9I Thank junior for the crown. (3)
10K Carpenter sounds OK. (6)
11H Loud musical instrument makes another. (5)
12D Sounds like I look around. (3)
12F Oric made this fibre. (4)

DOWN

- 1C Are you this adolescent. (5)
2L Grand game of tennis. (4)
3C You need wings to oscillate. (5)
3I Let up the fifth letters. (4)
5C Having the gall to be ill. (5)
5J Ache for French bread. (4)
7A In front of the lorry. (3)
7F Rest on this cloth. (5)
8J Excuse the prisoner. (6)
10A Mollusc costing a shilling a pound. (5)
10K Robinson's quick farewell. (4)
11H Junior driving a car up an inlet. (5)
12D Surpass the computer program. (5)
14H Mean to hold fast. (5)
15F Sorry to be on the French road. (3)
Answers next week



- ACROSS: 1F Nova;
1H Outed; 1L Wage;
2J Tine; 4C Blaze;
5K Toffee; 6F
March; 6M Skirt; 7H
Jungle; 7O Rove; 9J
Upend; 10C Wrist;
12F Cage; 12L
Body; 12N Play.
DOWN: 1E Onion; 1L
Writ; 2J Tea; 3F
Vat; 5H Diet; 6B
Maxim; 7K Fakir; 9F
Cinque; 10C Wash;
10J Pestle; 13J
Drool; 14C Tough;
15I Deny.