

## Israeli artist using Haldon trees

AN Israeli artist is bringing a unique exhibition to Exeter. material from 19 different countries.

Multimedia artist Shai Zakai will showcase her work at the Centre for Contemporary Art and the Natural World, at Haldon Forest, near Exeter.

The exhibition is based on a 14-year project by the artist and involves a collection of 'up-cycled' boxes containing organic

Designer Eran Spitzer and Shai will create handmade shelves from local fallen trees for the 50 imported boxes, connecting Britannia Park in Israel, close to where Shai lives, with Haldon Forest.

The exhibition takes place on Saturday.

# Forest arts centre in Israeli funds row

AN arts centre on the edge of Exeter has become embroiled in a protest over Israeli government support for a new exhibition that opens on Haldon Hill this Sunday.

The Exeter Palestine Solidarity Campaign (EPSC), which recently drew more than 1,000 people to a protest march in Exeter, has condemned the Haldon-based Centre for Contemporary Arts in the Natural World (CCANW).

Its latest exhibition Forest Tunes has benefited from a £3,000 grant from an organisation known as BI ARTS, whose money comes from the British Council and ministries of the government of Israel.

EPSC has asked the centre and Israeli artist Shai Zakai, founder and director of the Israeli Forum for Ecological Art, to "distance themselves" from the Israeli Government which, it says, has funded Shai's Forest Tunes free exhibition, which starts on Sunday at 2pm.

Lizi Allnatt, a member of EPSC, said "We would like to make it perfectly clear that we are not against the artist Shai Zakai, nor her work, but simply with the Israeli government involvement with this project.

"Ms Zakai has informed us that she has worked alongside Palestinians in the past.

"Clive Adams, the director of the centre, has spoken to us of his efforts to bring Palestinian art to the UK.

"It is all the more surprising for



**EMBROILED:** The Centre for Contemporary Arts on Haldon Hill, near Exeter

us that neither have so far agreed to make any statement distancing themselves from Israeli government policy whilst being happy to use Israeli government funding.

"If the centre and Shai were to return the funding or at least make a statement saying they do not in any way agree with the illegal actions — under international law — of continued settlement building in the West Bank, or the UN cited war crimes which took place in the attacks on Gaza to name just a few, then more people would be able to enjoy the exhibition with a clear conscience."

Mr Adams said: "To help fund the exhibition, CCANW successfully applied for a grant of £3,000 from BI ARTS, whose money comes from the British Council and ministries of the government of Israel.

"BI ARTS helps fund the professional development and ex-

change of artists living in Israel or the UK.

"Over the past two years BI ARTS has actively been attracting applications from the Arab community in Israel.

"It is strictly apolitical and all beneficiaries of the scheme, both past and present, have been given complete artistic freedom to challenge and question the world around them through their work in ways that are not constrained by or sympathetic to any particular government policy."

Mr Adams said he had spelt out to EPSC his own involvement as a supporter of Palestinian art in his private capacity as Commissioner for the Biennale in Korea in 1995 and in the approaches he made in 2004 to the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies at the University of Exeter and the Arts Council to show and fund exhibitions of Palestinian and other Arab artists.