



Bohemian National Hall
321 E 73rd Street
New York
NY 10021



2025 'DISTURBING THE PEACE' AWARD
TO A COURAGEOUS WRITER AT RISK
SOLICITATION OF NOMINATIONS

The Vaclav Havel Center is soliciting nominations for its most prestigious Award - the 'Disturbing the Peace' Award to a Courageous Writer at Risk.

The award recognizes writers of distinguished works of fiction, literary nonfiction, biography, memoir, drama, lyrics or poetry who are courageous in dissent and have suffered unjust persecution because of their outspoken defense of democracy and human rights.

The award is designed also to help protect awardees with the shield of international attention while enriching public understanding of the power of the written word to preserve and promote humanity's highest ideals.

The award comes with a \$5,000 cash prize and, if feasible for the winner, travel to New York City to receive the prize.

All human rights supporting institutions and individuals are eligible to nominate writers from any country who advocate for human rights and who have suffered unjust persecution. Nominations of women and writers from the Global South are encouraged. Because the judging panels operate only in English, priority will be given to works that are readily available in the English language. Nominations must be accompanied by a short biography outlining the nominee's literary achievement, record of dissent, a bibliography of her or his works, and a statement expressing the reasons for the nomination.

Contact: Jana Krupkova, jana@havelcenter.org
Deadline for nominations: Thursday May 1, 2025



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Previous winners of the Disturbing the Peace Award for a Courageous Writer at Risk:

2024: Joint winners Arundhati Roy (India) and Toomaj Salehi (Iran)

2023: Alaa Abdel Fattah (Egypt)

2022: Andrey Kurkov (Ukraine)

2021: Dmitri Strotsev (Belarus)

2020: Angel Santiesteban Prats (Cuba)

2019: Asli Erdogan (Turkey)

2018: Liao Yiwu (China)

2017: Burhan Sönmez (Turkey)

2016: Ma Thida (Myanmar)

Vaclav Havel (1936-2011) playwright, essayist, political dissident, and president of Czechoslovakia and later the Czech Republic. He first gained fame as a playwright with *The Garden Party* (1963), which satirized Czechoslovakia's communist bureaucracy. During the repression following the 1968 Prague Spring, Havel became an outspoken advocate for the country's liberalization and a leader of the Charter 77 movement, which called on the government to honor its human rights commitments under the Helsinki Accords. Although his theatrical works were banned, his philosophical writings circulated in samizdat form and had a profound influence on dissidents throughout the Soviet bloc. Until the communists lost power in 1989, Havel was harassed, arrested, and imprisoned for more than four years for alleged anti-state activities. He was elected president in Czechoslovakia's first free elections in the post-communist period. His seminal essay, *The Power of the Powerless* (1978), continues to inspire democratic and human rights movements worldwide.