‘PEN International has traditionally been a place where great artists of stage and screen –Thornton Wilder, Maurice Maeterlinck, Arthur Miller, Ronald Harwood, Octavio Paz and Harold Pinter– have fought for freedom of expression the world over. Today, as even a mobile phone can be a movie camera, we are able to bear witness to human rights violations as never before. In these times, more than ever, PEN defends playwrights, screenwriters and filmmakers who are censored, silenced and jailed’

– JENNIFER CLEMENT, PEN INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

‘I consider freedom of expression the most important cause that PEN supports. Without freedom of expression we are lost’

– RONALD HARWOOD, PEN INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT EMERITUS

‘My respect for this organisation has no borders...PEN has been so fierce, so consistent and ferocious in its efforts that it is hard to ignore their worldwide impact.’

– TONI MORRISON, PEN INTERNATIONAL VICE PRESIDENT

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PEN International is a registered UK charity under the name International P. E. N. Our charity number is 1117088.
PEN International and the stage and screen worlds have been intertwined for almost one hundred years. One of PEN’s founding members, along with H.G Wells, was George Bernard Shaw.

Exceptional writers, playwrights, screenwriters, actors and film directors have been and are today members of PEN. In the 97 years since its inception, PEN's active members have included Chinua Achebe, Margaret Atwood, J.M. Coetzee, Joseph Conrad, Nadine Gordimer, Günter Grass, Vaclav Havel, Eugène Ionesco, Mario Vargas Llosa, Norman Mailer, Amin Maalouf, Arthur Miller, Toni Morrison, Pablo Neruda, Sofi Oksanen, Harold Pinter, Salman Rushdie, Orhan Pamuk, Léopold Sédar Senghor, Susan Sontag, Tom Stoppard, Rabindranath Tagore, Luisa Valenzuela, H.G. Wells, Liu Xiaobo and many more. Together, with members from around the world, we have fought to protect the written word in all its forms.

As PEN International approaches its centennial year, the need for what we do is constantly growing, and with it our need for support from our community.

'I know from my own experience that you can be censored as easily on the screen as on the page. PEN International is there, around the world, to defend us, however brutal or subtle the context.'

– DAVID CRONENBERG

Although PEN’s membership has always included advocates from the stage and screen, we are also increasingly fighting for the freedom of playwrights, directors and screenwriters:

- Most recently, PEN International has been campaigning for the freedom of Ukrainian filmmaker Oleg Sentsov, who is currently serving 20 years in a Russian labour camp for his peaceful political activities.
- We have long campaigned for Turkish journalist and documentary filmmaker Can Dündar, who’s last book We Are Arrested has been adapted for the stage by the Royal Shakespeare Company. He now lives in exile in Germany.
- We have worked with the founder of the production company Eye for Africa, Prudence Uriri, now in exile in Norway; the renowned playwright Christopher Mlalazi, exiled in Mexico; and the Iranian visual artist and filmmaker Elahe Rahroniya, also exiled in Norway.

The Stage and Screen Circle is an opportunity for both individuals and companies from the film, TV and theatre industries to support the essential work of PEN International in protecting freedom of expression and celebrating story-telling.

“As Producers of the New York hit play White Rabbit Red Rabbit; we’re honored to support PEN International, their mission, and the power of an individual voice to make a difference.”

– TOM KIRDAHY AND DEVLIN ELLIOT

Join the Stage and Screen Circle and your membership will contribute to PEN’s work throughout the stage and screen professions:

PEN-INTERNATIONAL.ORG/STAGEANDSCREEN