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## MAY 5 PEN LITERARY GALA HONORS FREE EXPRESSION DEFENDERS ON THE FRONT LINES

TOM STOPPARD TO BE HONORED WITH PEN'S HIGHEST ACCOLADE

'CHARLIE HEBDO' STAFF RECOGNIZED IN FIRST NEW YORK APPEARANCE SINCE  
ATTACK

PEN SALUTES PUBLISHER HONOREE MARKUS DOHLE, CEO OF PENGUIN  
RANDOM HOUSE

NEW YORK—On Tuesday, May 5, 2015, New York's literati will gather en masse in defense of freedom of expression at the annual PEN American Center Literary Gala at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City.

In a year bloodied by violent attacks on expression, PEN will honor some of free speech's most fearless defenders. Esteemed playwright **Sir Tom Stoppard** will accept the **PEN/Allen Foundation Literary Service Award** for his extraordinary career as a dramatist and his abiding commitment to the defense of creative freedom worldwide. Paris-based satirical weekly *Charlie Hebdo* will be honored with the **PEN/Toni and James C. Goodale Freedom of Expression Courage Award**, to be received by staff member **Jean-Baptiste Thoret**, who arrived to work late on January 7, barely escaping the attack that killed eight of his co-workers and four others.

The Gala will also salute Penguin Random House CEO **Markus Dohle** for his leadership role in the global literary community.

Stoppard's critically acclaimed works have brought new and powerful perspectives on the human condition to wide audiences over a remarkably prolific decades-long career, exploring the social and political forces that shape individual identity. In the 1970s and 80s, Stoppard drew attention to the plight of political dissidents in Eastern and Central Europe, forming a close friendship with novelist and former Czech president Václav Havel. Stoppard has also campaigned for oppressed artists in Belarus, bringing the embattled Belarus Free Theater to New York in 2011. He joins an illustrious list of past PEN/Allen Foundation Literary Service Award winners, including **Salman Rushdie, Toni Morrison, Philip Roth, Edward Albee, Michael Ondaatje, Margaret Atwood, E.L. Doctorow, and Gore Vidal.**

“Stoppard is without peer among modern dramatists, using comedy, theatricality, and intimate stories to explore the deepest reaches of identity, ethics, and freedom,” said PEN President **Andrew Solomon**. “While his accomplishments as a playwright are universally acknowledged, we honor Stoppard not only for his literary genius, but also because he is a writer of conscience, courageously using his pen and his voice to speak out on behalf of those denied the freedoms that have helped make his own work possible.”

The day after the January 7 attack that claimed twelve lives, the surviving staff of *Charlie Hebdo* magazine vowed to continue publication, releasing their next edition on time with a print run expanded from 40,000 to over eight million under the mantra “All is Forgiven,” donating all proceeds to the families of the victims. The *Charlie Hebdo* attacks dealt a blow to the bedrock principle that no act of expression, no matter how provocative or offensive, can justify violence. *Charlie Hebdo* film critic and essayist Jean-Baptiste Thoret will accept the PEN/James and Toni C. Goodale Freedom of Expression Courage Award on behalf of his colleagues, and will be accompanied by *The New Yorker* cartoon editor **Bob Mankoff**, who wrote a stirring tribute to his Parisian compatriots published in his magazine’s January 15 issue.

“It is the role of the satirists in any free society to challenge the powerful and the sacred, pushing boundaries in ways that make expression freer and more robust for us all,” said PEN Executive Director **Suzanne Nossel**. “In paying the ultimate price for the exercise of their freedom, and then soldiering on amid devastating loss, *Charlie Hebdo* deserves to be recognized for its dauntlessness in the face of one of the most noxious assaults on expression in recent memory.”

PEN American Center will also pay tribute to Markus Dohle of Penguin Random House as its Publisher Honoree at the 2015 Literary Gala.

“Penguin Random House has been among PEN’s most stalwart supporters, with a history of resisting censorship and promoting reverence for the written word,” said Nossel. “Markus Dohle’s passionate leadership has helped galvanize an industry amid transformation, bringing energy and vision that are fueling reinvention in a dynamic and fertile new era of literary creativity.”

In the coming weeks, PEN will announce the winner of the **PEN/Barbara Goldsmith Freedom to Write Award**. Presented annually at the gala, this honor shines the global spotlight on an imprisoned writer persecuted for exercising her right to free expression. Since its inception in 1987, thirty-five of the 39 writers selected have been freed due in part to the attention and pressure generated by the Award.

The 2015 PEN Literary Gala coincides with the organization’s eleventh annual **PEN World Voices Festival of International Literature**, which will be held from May 4-10 and will feature Stoppard in an opening night performance.

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*Founded in 1922, **PEN American Center** is a community of 4,000 U.S. writers working to bring down barriers to free expression worldwide. Its distinguished members carry on the achievements in literature and advancement of human rights of such past members as Langston Hughes, Arthur Miller, and Susan Sontag. To learn more, visit [www.pen.org](http://www.pen.org).*

***Tom Stoppard** was born in Zlin, Czechoslovakia in 1937 and moved to England, via Singapore and India, with his family in 1946. He began his working life in 1954 as a junior reporter on the Western Daily Press. In 1967 Stoppard’s first full-length play, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, was staged by the National Theatre. This play was followed by other award winning works, including *Jumpers*, *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour* (with *Andre Previn*), *Travesties*, *Night and Day*, *The Real**

Thing, Hapgood, Arcadia, Indian Ink, The Invention of Love, The Coast of Utopia (a trilogy), and Rock'n'Roll. *His many stage adaptations and translations include Undiscovered Country (Schnitzler), On the Razzle (Nestroy), Rough Crossing (Molnar), The Seagull (Chekhov), Henry IV (Pirandello), Heroes (Sibleyras), Ivanov (Chekhov), and The Cherry Orchard (Chekhov). Tom Stoppard has also written for radio, television, and film. His screen credits, as writer and co-writer, include Brazil, Empire of the Sun, Enigma, and Shakespeare in Love, winner of an Academy Award for best original screenplay. His most recent work includes, for screen, Anna Karenina; for television Parade's End; and for radio Darkside. His latest play, The Hard Problem, opened at the National Theatre in January 2015. He also directed his own screenplay of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead (1990), which won the Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival. Stoppard received a knighthood in 1997 and in 2000 was awarded the Order of Merit by Her Majesty the Queen.*