



Khalid Albaih

The Biennial ICORN Network Meeting  
& PEN International WiPC Conference  
Lillehammer 31 May-2 June 2017

ORGANIZERS:



INTERNATIONAL CITIES OF REFUGEE NETWORK



COOPERATION PARTNERS:



ICORN Programme for 2017 joint biennial PEN International WiPC Conference and ICORN Network Meeting

# ICORN PROGRAMME

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When freedom of expression is threatened, curtailed or outlawed, artists and writers are compelled to find ever more inventive ways to evade authoritarian repression. New forms, new words, new means of resistance emerge at every turn and in every language.

'In Other Words', the joint ICORN network meeting & PEN International WiPC conference in Lillehammer in May 2017, is an exploration and a celebration of the resilience of art and literature in the face of a 'post truth' world.

More than 300 writers, artists, activists, city representatives and other guests from 60 countries will engage with the festival public in seminars, workshops, readings, concerts and manifestations. Topics such as "Guantanamo Diary live", "One day in Aleppo", "Freedom of expression in a post truth world" and "The landscape of residencies" will be on the agenda, along with fresh eyewitness reports from areas where writers, artists and human rights defenders are most threatened.

ICORN and PEN International is thrilled to be able to integrate our major biennial joint event into the programme of the Norwegian Festival of Literature (30 May – 4 June). The programming of both events are duly coordinated, and we already see the mutual benefits emerge.

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**Accommodation and main Venue:** [Scandic Lillehammer Hotel](#)

**Organisers:** ICORN, the International Cities of Refuge Network and PEN International

**Official hosts:** The City of Lillehammer

**Cooperation partners:** The Norwegian festival of literature, Norwegian PEN

## WEDNESDAY 31 MAY

**10:00-14:00** Registration at Lillehammer Hotel

**12:00-13:30** Lunch

**13.30 – 14.30** Opening of the ICORN Network Meeting

Welcome speeches and testimonies from three ICORN writers/artists: Anzhelina Polonskaya (Russia/Frankfurt), Abdul Jabbar Alsuhibi (Yemen/Helsingborg), Tesfagiorgis Habte (Eritrea/Luleå).

**14.30-15.45** ICORN workshop session

<b>The future of ICORN</b>	The ICORN Board and the Secretariat has begun the work on the strategic plan for ICORN 2018-2022. Join in and take part in deciding what ICORN should look like in the future.
<b>International cooperation projects for ICORN cities</b>	Presentation and discussion of three current EU projects with participation of ICORN members: - Anchoring ICORN – navigating new possibilities for Freedom of Expression - Orpheus XXI – music for life and dignity - ENGAGE! Young Producers Building Bridges to a Freer World Input from cities of Krakow, Barcelona, Harstad and others
<b>Working with resettled journalists</b>	How can we enable journalists in exile to work and use their unique insights in their new local environments, and offer them tools to continue their fight for freedom of expression in their home countries and regions? With Lotta Schüllerqvist (RSF) and Olav Brostrup Müller (Lillehammer) and others.
<b>Mapping interests, needs and resources among exiled writers and artists</b>	Exiled writers and artists never operate in a vacuum. They need visibility and contacts with publishers, arts insiders and wider professional communities. Jude Dibia has written and published from his ICORN Residency in Malmö, and with Sidd Joag and Joshua Wolf Shenk, he will lead an exploratory search for new ideas and improved practices.

**15.45-16.00** Coffee break

**16.00-17.30** Speed dating session

In a diverse and dynamic exchange of competences, experiences and challenges, ICORN residents, member cities and a wide range of international cooperation partners are invited to present their work to the participants (organised jointly with PEN International).

**18:00 Welcome dinner reception**

In the presence of the Mayor of Lillehammer and representatives from the Norwegian Government and Parliament.

**20:00 In other words**

Opening performance with distinguished artists from Afghanistan, Iran, Syria, Palestine and Norway will perform a specially curated piece exploring the experience of exile and being silenced. Through a rich variety of genres and elements, the performance will touch on the necessity of having to invent new forms, new words and new means of resistance against repression and persecution. With Iranian singers Mahsa and Marjan Vahdat, actress Juni Dahr, pianist Tord Gustavsen, percussionist Kenneth Ekornes, Palestinian rapper Khaled Harara and the Lillehammer choir Mjøsikale, Afghan film creator Mohsen Hosaini, Syrian dancer Ahmad Joudeh, Afghan musician Hamid Sakhizada. Producer: Erik Hillestad.

Venue: Maihaugsalen

**22:00 Imprisoned writers event**

ICORN writers and artists join in readings and appeals with writers from the Norwegian Festival of Literature, supporting imprisoned writers, and in particular Asli Erdogan (Tyrkia), Narges Mohammadi (Iran), Khadija Ismailova (Azerbaijan), whom have been officially invited by the festival. Org. by Norwegian PEN and the Norwegian Festival of Literature.

Venue: The "tent" in the centre of Lillehammer.

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## THURSDAY 1 JUNE

**08:30 – 09:30** Slow dating

Open space for spontaneous encounters, regional/national meetings and other cooperation initiatives.

Venue: Hotel lobby/breakfast area

**08:30 – 09:30** Extraordinary General Assembly discussion about increase of membership fee

**10:00– 11:00 Keynote speech:** ‘You couldn’t make this up’

The Bjørnson lecture by **Kamila Shamsie**: In a world in which the phrase ‘you couldn’t make this up’ is increasingly on people’s lips as an expression of despair, what is the role of the imagination? Has the reality in which we find ourselves made the novel irrelevant, outdated, or at best a form of escapism? And what responsibility do writers bear for their silences, complicity, or unseeing over the course of our increasingly bleak century? Introduction by Salil Tripathi.

**Venue:** Maihaugsalen

**11:30-12.45** ICORN/PEN WiPC joint workshop session I

(The sessions consist of workshops, panels, debates, screenings, interviews, presentations, conversations)

<p><b>PUBLIC</b>  <b>Safeguarding freedom of expression in Turkey: What next?</b></p>	<p>Freedom of expression and media freedom in Turkey have deteriorated sharply since the failed coup attempt in July 2016. Hundreds of media outlets and publishing houses have been shut down and over one hundred writers are in jail following an unprecedented crackdown. Join Turkish writers as they discuss prospects for freedom of expression in Turkey following the landmark referendum in April 2017. With: Jørgen Lorentzen: Elif Günay, Burhan Sönmez, Abdollah Hejab, Irfan Babaoglu.</p>
<p><b>PUBLIC</b>  <b>Across the great divide</b></p>	<p>During the US Presidential election campaign 2016, Larry Siems and Anders Heger crossed the US from east to west and back again, discovering a striking difference in narratives through which politics is understood, a divide that after the election of Donald Trump has become only more evident.</p>
<p><b>The landscape of protection</b></p>	<p>PEN International and ICORN cooperate closely on protection of writers and artists at risk. In this workshop we highlight possibilities and best practices of cooperation for protection, both for writers/artists at risk in their home countries, and those who have had to leave their homes but are still not safe. With: MaThida, Guus van Zwoll (ProtectDefenders), Srirak Plipat (Freemuse) and others</p>
<p><b>Dialogue-the way to peace</b></p>	<p>The Nansen Center for Peace and Dialogue is a unique resource pool for anyone engaged with promoting human rights and democracy. Join them for a crash course in how to develop tools for dialogue that can transform situations of hate and division to peaceful co-existence and constructive communication. With Steinar Bryn.</p>
<p><b>Freedom of Expression/Country report: HORN OF AFRICA</b></p>	<p>ICORN has received a steady number of applications from Ethiopia and Eritrea for the past few years. With focus on certain countries or regions where human rights are challenged and freedom of expression under attack, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somalia will be scrutinized by international experts and writers/journalist in ICORN residencies. With Daniel Mekonnen, Girma Fantaye, UN Special Rapporteur on Eritrea and others.</p>

**12:45-14:15** Lunch

**14.15- 15.45** ICORN/PEN International joint workshop session II

(The sessions consist of workshops, panels, debates, screenings, interviews, presentations, conversations)

<b>PUBLIC</b> <b>Guantanamo diary live - Mohammedou Ould Slahi in conversation with Larry Siems</b>	Mohamedou Ould Slahi was imprisoned without charge for more than 14 years. Arrested in his native Mauritania, Slahi was rendered by the US to Jordan and Afghanistan, then to Cuba in August 2002. There, he was reduced to a number – “prisoner 760” at Guantanamo. With the assistance of American author, Larry Siems, Slahi published the Guantanamo Diary in 2015, now translated into several languages. He was released in October 2016. Meet him in conversation with Larry Siems. Slahi will appear on skype.
<b>PUBLIC</b> <b>Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o in conversation with Grace Mutandwa</b>	Zimbabwean writer Grace Mutandwa will explore with one of Africa's greatest writers, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, his journey into exile. How did language, identity and displacement influence and shape his creativity? What cultural elements are needed to make space for writers and communities living the reality of asylum, exile, or forced migration, to have their voices and stories heard?
<b>The landscape of relocation</b> <i>Sequel from:</i> <i>The landscape of protection</i>	PEN International and ICORN cooperate closely on temporary relocation of writers and artists. In this workshop, we highlight challenges and best practices of shorter and longer-term relocation of writers and artists at risk. We also look at how PEN centres and others can work with ICORN. With: Alexia Falisse (Justice and Peace), Henry Reese (City of Asylum), and others
<b>Continuing to Bridge Art and Activism: A Collaborative Approach Between Art, Cultural &amp; Human Rights Organizations</b>  <b>Organised by PEN America</b>	Despite the comprehensive range of resources available for creative artists fleeing persecution, a gap exists between artistic advocacy groups, human rights and the wider cultural sectors. This workshop will ask how human rights groups and artist advocacy groups can come together to defend the rights of artists, and how human rights organizations within a given national context can partner with local art/culture organizations, spread awareness, and create regional safety nets for artists at risk.

**15:45 – 16:15** Coffee Break

**16:15 -17:45** ICORN/PEN International joint workshop session III

(The sessions consist of workshops, panels, debates, screenings, interviews, presentations, conversations)

<b>PUBLIC</b> <b>«One day in Aleppo»</b> <b>Film screening Ali</b> <b>Allbrahim in</b> <b>conversation with Åsne</b> <b>Seierstad</b>	Syrian journalist, writer and documentary filmmaker, Ali Al-Ibrahim, has survived both Assad's prisons and ISIS' captivity. "One day in Aleppo" is his new documentary premiering at a Swiss film festival in April 2017. Following a screening of the film, he will talk with renowned Norwegian writer and journalist Åsne Seierstad about the art of reporting, and the challenges of telling the truth about Syria, from the inside and from outside.
<b>PUBLIC</b> <b>The PEN debate: Free</b> <b>Expression in a Post-</b> <b>Truth World</b>	What happens when lies are passed off as great truths by those who intend to influence the news cycle, sway an election, or sell a product? Are propaganda and biased facts a right under free speech? In this digital age, with countless virtual realities and mass media at our fingertips, how powerful are 'alternative facts'? And should we regulate the spread of fake news? Come and explore the ethics of post-truth narrative making and journalism in this PEN debate. With: Ma Thida (Myanmar PEN), Hayla (Ukraine PEN) Salil Tripathi) William Nygaard (PEN Norway)
<b>A safe return?</b>	The ICORN residency is temporary, but not all who participate in the programme can or feel comfortable returning to their country/region of origin. Is there anything ICORN and her partners can do to make the transition easier and safer? We hear from writers who have returned, and organisations who have experience with protection. With: Girma Fantaye, Mille Rode (Danish PEN), Ghias AlJundi, Joseph Bikanda (DefendDefenders) and others.
<b>Freedom of</b> <b>Expression/Country</b> <b>report: Iraq/Mosul</b>	Mosul is the home town of many writers and artists in the ICORN network. At the time of the network meeting, the Iraqi forces will have recaptured the city of Mosul from ISIS, or are close to doing so. They have formed a working group to discuss the future prospects of the city based on their experiences.

**18:00-20:00** Flexible dinner buffet

**19:00-24:00** ICORN and PEN International engage with the Norwegian Festival of Literature in a rich programme of performances, readings, concerts and debates throughout the city of Lillehammer.

## FRIDAY 2 JUNE

(ICORN and PEN separate programmes the whole day)

**09:00 – 09:30** Extraordinary General Assembly vote

For ICORN member cities

**09:30-10:15 ICORN Plenary:** What is freedom of expression and why is it so important?

Lecture by Norwegian writer Peter Normann Waage, followed by Q&A with the audience

**10:15 – 10:45** Coffee break

**10:45-11:45** ICORN plenary session

Reports from the ICORN Secretariat, presentation of budgets and plans by the ICORN Board, presentation of venue for ICORN GA 2018

**11:45-12:30** ICORN Plenary: The free and the unfree city.

Reports from two Norwegian journalists, Jan Zahl and Finn Våga, who have followed five ICORN writers/artists for one day in their city of refuge, and visited colleagues and friends in their respective home countries and cities. The project is exhibited in the foyer of the Maihaugsalen.

**12:30 -13:00** ICORN Plenary Round up

**13:00-14:00** Lunch

**14:00-16:00**

Options for tours to Sigrid Undset house, Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson house, Nansen Centre for Peace and Dialogue - and continuation of the Norwegian Festival of Literature.

## WEEKEND 2 -4 JUNE

The Norwegian Festival of Literature: Special festival package offered for all participants.

The festival pass received upon registration is included in the registration fee and valid Wednesday to Friday (excluding the Friday Bank-night). A special package for the weekend, including the Friday Bank-night and Saturday and Sunday, is offered at 800 NOK and can be bought at the festival stand at the hotel (Festival pass for 1 day is 600 NOK).

## EXHIBITIONS

### **FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION Second international cartoon contest and exhibition**

By the Norwegian Cartoonist Gallery and tOOns MaG /Arifur Rahman.

Venue: Elephant Kunsthall. Opening Wednesday 31 May at 15.00.

### **Cartooning Syria**

An exhibition of almost 30 Syrian cartoonists. This unique exposition of political cartoons and posters shows the complex and disgraceful situation in Syria in an artistic way. Curator Ronald Bos.

Venue: Kulturhuset Banken/Ekspedisjonen. Opening Wednesday 31 May at 16.30.