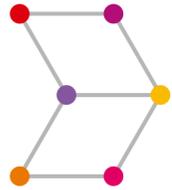


ICORN

INTERNATIONAL CITIES OF REFUGE NETWORK



Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 19 in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights

In Gaza, hip-hop is the language of the youth and the rebels. We need people to resist, not only by weapons, but also by words. My friends and I were constantly subject to censorship, harassment and arrests under the pretext of blasphemy and 'improper' behaviour. The chance I got from ICORN and the city of Gothenburg became a key to the rest of my life; it opened doors and it was up to me to seize the opportunity.

KHALED HARARA (Gaza/Palestine)
ICORN residency: Gothenburg 2013–2015.
Studies music at the University of Gothenburg and manages projects promoting music and free expression in Gaza.



Photo: Jakob Riise

PROTECT AND PROMOTE FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Writers, journalists and artists often become the first targets when authoritarian regimes and repressive groups clamp down on freedom of expression. They are on the front line, giving voice to ideas, debate and critique, which frequently challenge existing societal norms and concepts. This can make them subject to censorship, persecution, imprisonment and death.

As a response, ICORN, the International Cities of Refuge Network, offers temporary, long-term safe residencies to writers, journalists and artists at risk, so they can continue their work without fear of persecution.

We survive under great difficulties. And sometimes we do not survive.

ANNA POLITKOVSKAYA (1958—2006)
A fierce critic of Russian authorities and the Chechen wars, the Russian journalist and human rights activist, Anna Politkovskaya, was shot dead outside her home in Moscow in 2006.



Photo: Hossein Saharvandeh/ICORN

Speed dating session for writers/artists, cities and organisations at the ICORN Network Meeting in Amsterdam 2015.

RESIDENCIES FOR PERSECUTED WRITERS AND ARTISTS

Any writer or artist, who is threatened or persecuted for expressing his or her opinions or ideas through their professional work, can apply for an ICORN residency. ICORN accepts applications from all writers and artists, including journalists, creative writers, translators, publishers, academic writers, cartoonists, filmmakers, visual artists, bloggers and musicians.

ICORN offers two-year residencies for persecuted writers and artists in an ICORN city of refuge.

The host city assists with obtaining a residency permit, covers travel costs, housing, a monthly grant and health insurance. During the residency, the city also provides a suitable work-space, and helps build networks with relevant culture professionals, schools and universities, human rights practitioners, the media and policy makers, locally, nationally and internationally.

It is our common task to make sure that their voice is heard and becomes the object of interest for mass media, authorities and ordinary people of the free world.

DANUTA GLONDYS
Krakow City of Refuge/ICORN Board

CITIES OF REFUGE

By 2016, more than 50 cities had joined the network, to host writers and artists who face threats and persecution. The cities of refuge are located in more than 15 countries across Europe, the United States and Mexico, and continue to expand towards South America, South Africa, Australia and Asia in the coming years.

The cities of refuge are managed independently and collaborate locally with a large number of cultural, political and civil society organisations.



Photo: Hossein Saharvandeh/ICORN

FL Henry Reese, Director of Pittsburgh City of Asylum, signing membership agreement with ICORN Director Helge Lunde and Chair of ICORN Board, Peter Ripken.



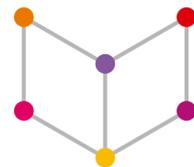
Photo: Jasol Marziani

Asieh Amini, journalist and human rights activist, ICORN resident in Trondheim 2010–2012. Fights for women's rights and to combat the death penalty in Iran, particularly stoning and juvenile execution in Iran.

Since 2006, more than 150 writers and artists have been offered a residency in an ICORN city. The hosted writers and artists play a vital role, both in highlighting human rights and free speech violations in their home countries, and in supporting their in-country colleagues. They bring new impulses to the host cities; build bridges between countries, cultures, politics and people, and contribute insight and new perspectives to the local debate.

THE NETWORK

ICORN is an international organisation for cities and regions offering temporary, long-term residencies for writers, journalists and artists at risk, advancing freedom of expression, defending democratic values and promoting international solidarity.



ICORN forms a global and dynamic network of hospitality and creativity in the ongoing struggle for human rights and freedom of expression.

ICORN cooperates closely with PEN International and local PEN centres, as well as a large number of civil society organisations within the fields of human rights, arts and migration, and with public, governmental and intergovernmental bodies, locally and internationally.

Throughout the twentieth century, the City of Paris has been host to exiles from around the world, for intellectuals and artists. The values of human rights and freedom of expression is at the core of the international strategy of our city. Being a part of ICORN, hosting writers and artists at risk, is both a very concrete and an important symbolic fulfilment of our commitment.

ANNE HIDALGO
Mayor of the City of Paris



Photo: Jean-Baptiste Guillet/ICORN

Two ICORN cities sign joint action to protect and promote writers and artists in exile. The Mayor of Mexico City, Miguel Angel Mancera and the Mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo.

ICORN SECRETARIAT

The ICORN secretariat is located in Stavanger, Norway, and acts as the administration and communication hub for the local residency programmes worldwide.

The primary tasks of the administration are to:

- Receive and assess applications from writers and artists at risk.
- Establish connections between persecuted writers/artists and potential cities of refuge.
- Find and apply sustainable models of hosting, protecting and promotion for each city and each hosted writer and artist.
- Maintain and develop the network through capacity building, annual meetings and a continuous exchange of knowledge and experience.
- Recruit new cities that can provide residencies for the large number of writers and artists at risk.
- Assist, advise and connect host cities and partners throughout the network.
- Connect and cooperate with relevant public and civil society organisations.
- Fundraise.

HISTORY

ICORN was established in Stavanger in 2006, during a meeting between representatives from the cities of Amsterdam, Barcelona, Frankfurt, Stockholm, Mexico City, Norwich, Stavanger and others. Also present were Norwegian PEN and PEN International. The cities were part of the International Network of Cities of Asylum (INCA), founded in 1995 by Salman Rushdie and colleagues from the International Parliament of Writers (IPW) to provide cities of refuge for writers forced to live in exile.

When the IPW and INCA dissolved in 2005, many cities wanted to continue their work for freedom of expression. A new network was formed at the meeting in Stavanger in 2006, and in 2010, ICORN was officially established as an independent, international membership organisation. As of 2014, ICORN cities also offer residencies to artists and musicians at risk. ICORN has experienced an immense growth the past few years and in 2015 passed 50 members. The 2016 General Assembly in Paris marks the 10th anniversary of the network.



Photo: Tommy Ellingsen

CHENJERAI HOVE

ICORN residency: Stavanger 2005—2007
Chenjerai Hove (1956–2015) is one of the founding figures of modern Zimbabwean literature. An outspoken critic of Robert Mugabe, he was forced to leave his homeland in 2001. From exile, Hove remained an uncompromising fighter for freedom in Zimbabwe, publishing collections of novels, poetry and social and political commentaries.

Eagle from Rainbows in the dust (1998)

fly and perch
fly and perch
no one else perches
except a tyrant
in a state house
with guns, and silence
for the nation.



© Marc Neyens/Paris

ICORN

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SUPPORT: We depend on your generous support to carry out our international programme for writers, journalists and artists at risk. For more information on how to get involved, see icorn.org/donation

WRITERS/ARTISTS
Selected profiles

SVETLANA ALEXIEVICH (Belarus)



Profession: Writer, investigative journalist
ICORN residency: Gothenburg 2006—08.
After the controversial publication of her book, *Zinky Boys*, Alexievich has been in and out of exile, continuously targeted by the Belarus government for her critique, and alleged affiliation with the CIA. Since 2011, she lives and works in Belarus, continuing to document the history of emotions of the Soviet and post-Soviet people. She was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature 2015.

ZINEB EL RHAZOUÏ (Morocco)



Profession: Journalist, writer, human rights activist
ICORN residency: Ljubljana 2011—13.
Repeatedly censored, harassed and arbitrarily arrested by the Moroccan government for her political and journalistic activities, El Rhazoui fled to Europe upon treats of imprisonment. She writes books, lectures and works as journalist at *Charlie Hebdo*. After the attacks on the cartoon magazine in January 2015, she lives under constant police protection.

RAMY ESSAM (Egypt)



Profession: Musician
ICORN residency: Malmö 2014—16.
As *'the voice of the revolution'* during the Arab Spring in Egypt, Essam's songs, critical of the abuses of the Mubarak regime, quickly grew in popularity, drawing support from anti-government protesters. Essam is touring internationally and is contracted by Tom Morello/*Firebrand Records*, but continues to be censored by the Egyptian army.

DESSALE BEREKHET (Eritrea)



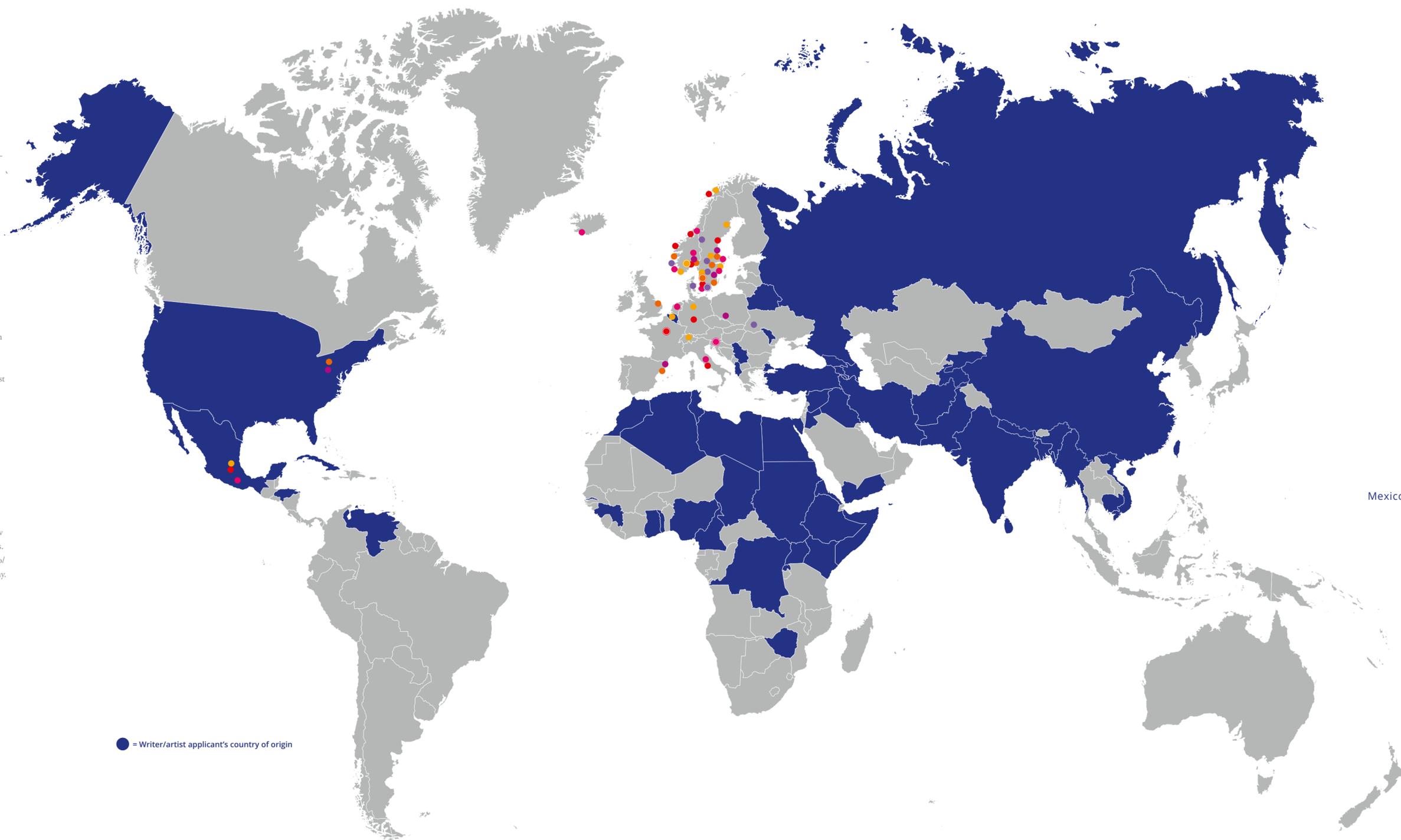
Profession: Journalist and writer
ICORN residency: Bø 2012—14.
Arbitrarily arrested for over five months and detained in solitary confinement, Berekhet was the victim of various forms of torture and abuse because of his writings. In 2014, he established PEN Eritrea, and continues to write stories and lecture about the contemporary situation in Eritrea internationally.

MANA NEYESTANI (Iran)



Profession: Cartoonist
ICORN residency: Paris 2011—13.
After his 2006 cartoon publication in *Iran Jome* magazine led to protests of dissenting ethnic Azeri in Tabriz, Neyestani was jailed for three month without a trial or verdict for inciting violence and promoting separatism. His graphic novel, *An Iranian Metamorphosis*, is autobiographical and set in the Evin prison. He lives and works in Paris.

Photo credits: Svetlana Alexievich: Tomasz Wiech/Krakow Festival. Zineb El Rhazoui: Oslo Freedom Forum. Ramy Essam: Fredrik Elg. Dessale Berekhet: Bøbladnet. Mana Neyestani: Louis Canadas.



ICORN CITIES
by January 2016

- Amsterdam
- Barcelona
- Bergen
- Bø
- Brussels
- Chiusi
- Copenhagen
- Dalarna
- Drøbak
- Elsinore
- Eskilstuna
- Frankfurt
- Gävle
- Girona
- Gothenburg
- Hannover
- Harstad
- Haugesund
- Ithaca (NY)
- Jönköping's Län
- Karlstad
- Krakov
- Kristiansand
- Levanger
- Lillehammer
- Linköping
- Ljubljana
- Luzern
- Malmö
- Mexico City, *Casa Africa*
- Mexico City, *Casa Refugio Citlaltépetl*
- Molde
- Norrköping
- Norwich
- Oaxaca
- Oslo
- Paris
- Pittsburgh
- Region of Tuscany
- Reykjavík
- Sigtuna
- Skåne
- Skellefteå
- Skien
- Stavanger
- Stockholm
- Tromsø
- Trondheim
- Uddevalla
- Uppsala
- Västra Götaland County
- Växjö
- Århus

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