

Václav Havel

LIBRARY FOUNDATION

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PRESS RELEASE

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New York, NY, July 22, 2022. The Vaclav Havel Library Foundation announced today that the winner of the 2022 Disturbing the Peace Award to a Courageous Writer at Risk is Ukrainian writer Andrey Kurkov.

Kurkov is the author of twenty screenplays and nineteen novels, including the bestselling *Death and the Penguin*, first published in Russian in 1996. In 2018 Kurkov was elected the president of PEN Ukraine, a cultural and human rights nonprofit organization. He is a respected commentator on Ukraine and since Russia's military invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has been an important source of information and analysis about the war for domestic and foreign audiences.

Kurkov's works have been popular in the former Soviet Union since the 1990s, but he remained relatively unknown elsewhere until *Death and the Penguin* was published in English in 2001. Kurkov's best-known works include *The Bickford Fuse* (2009) and the children's book *The Adventures of Baby Vacuum Cleaner Gosha* (2008). His latest novel, *The Grey Bees*, was published in the United States by Deep Vellum in April 2022.

In early 2005, Kurkov was declared a persona non grata in Russia. After the war began, Kurkov moved from his countryside home to Kyiv, where he broadcasts a regular [Letter from Ukraine](#) on BBC Radio 4.

Serving on the jury for this year's award were British writer Richard Cohen; American novelist, short-story writer, journalist, and vice president emeritus of PEN International Joanne Leedom-Ackerman; and Belarusian poet and publisher Dmitri Strotsev, the recipient of the 2021 Disturbing the Peace Award.

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