
CARYL CHURCHILL RECEIVES THE EUROPEAN DRAMA AWARD 2022

THE EUROPEAN NEW TALENT DRAMA AWARD 2022 GOES TO LENA LAGUSHONKOVA

The British playwright Caryl Churchill is the recipient of the European Drama Award 2022 for her complete works.

The jury, chaired by Peter Michalzik, on the reasoning behind their decision: "Playwright Caryl Churchill, born in 1938, has created a substantial, powerful and very politically engaged body of work over the course of more than 60 years. The diversity of the forms her work takes is a result of the diversity of her themes. Churchill tackles social, human, scientific and political issues. In the 1970s her writing became feminist (and has remained so). At that time she began to explore themes of gender and sex, racism and colonialism. In the 1980s, she took aim at financial capitalism, using the City of London as an example. In her numerous plays, she has sharply laid bare different power structures. Since the late 1990s, her work has shown a marked interest in Eastern Europe.

Her best-known and most important works include *Cloud Nine* (1979), which explores imperialist thinking, *Top Girls* (1982), about women in a man's world, *A Mouthful of Birds* (1986), in which she combined spoken word theatre with dance theatre for the first time, *Serious Money* (1987), a play written in verse, *Blue Heart* (1997), and *A Number* (2002), broaching questions of cloning and human identity. *Love and Information* (2012) and *Ding Dong the Wicked* (2013) deal with fundamental human questions.

Caryl Churchill continues to write to this day. In the great tradition of English-language literature, she created incisive dialogues along with onomatopoeic text surfaces. Her plays have surreal but also realistic traits. In addition to her intensive collaboration with dance theatre, which has inspired numerous continental European dramatists, she has also worked for musical theatre productions on many occasions. With her work, which is demanding in form and content, Churchill has repeatedly challenged critics and audiences. Caryl Churchill is one of the greatest living playwrights. Her work is well known but not famous and now only rarely performed. Time for a reassessment and reconsideration."

Caryl Churchill has in the past received multiple awards for her extensive work, including the Obie Award for Playwriting and the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize several times. She has also received the Olivier Award and was inducted into the American Theatre Hall of Fame in 2010.

Winfried Kretschmann, Minister-President of the State of Baden-Württemberg, is patron of the European Drama Award: "The European Drama Award negotiates Europe's diversity on stage and sees theatre as a unifying force. The terrible war in Ukraine makes it especially relevant today. A war on European soil not only means immeasurable suffering for the people in Ukraine, but it is also an affront to fundamental values such as freedom, democracy and equality. I am all the more pleased that Caryl Churchill, one of the most innovative playwrights of the last 40 years, is being honoured. Her diverse body of work is rife with profound truths about power structures and abuses of power, gender issues and capitalist market mechanisms. In other words, topics that could not be more pressing today."

Minister for the Arts Theresia Bauer said: "With the European Drama Award, we distinguish innovative authors of contemporary drama who have a particularly European outlook and impact. This year we honour an important contemporary feminist playwright who has radically shattered theatrical conventions and left her mark on whole generations. With the New Talent Drama Award, a Ukrainian playwright is placed centre stage, focusing attention squarely on our current times marked by crisis, when the shockwaves from the war in Ukraine are being so profoundly felt."

"The European Drama Award closes a significant gap in the promotion of playwrights and demonstrates Baden-Württemberg's close ties with Europe. The award showcases the aesthetic and thematic power of European drama – let's be inspired and roused by it!" says Schauspiel director Burkhard C. Kosminski. "My thanks go to the state of Baden-Württemberg, Christof Hettich and the SRH, as well as the jurors for their breadth of vision. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to this year's prize winners."

The European Drama Award, with its 75,000 euro prize money, is awarded every two years by Schauspiel Stuttgart. Funded by the Baden-Württemberg Ministry of the Arts, it celebrates European playwrights who have produced an outstanding body of work. It is the most valuable award to focus on the dramatic arts in Europe in all their diversity, and sees them as a point of commonality between European cultures. The first winner, in 2020, was the playwright, director, actor and theatre director Wajdi Mouawad, who is living and working in France.

The independent jury 2022 was composed of the following members (as in 2020): Barbara Engelhardt (artistic director of the Theater Maillon, Strasbourg), Peter Kümmel (German theatre critic and editor of the arts section of German weekly *Die Zeit*), Peter Michalzik (author, jury chairperson), Petra Olschowski (State secretary of the Ministry for Science, Research and the Arts, in the German state of Baden-Württemberg) and Thomas Ostermeier (director and artistic director of the Schaubühne Berlin theatre).

In a multi-stage selection process, the international advisory board initially nominated a long list of 22 playwrights from 14 European countries. In order to be nominated, a playwright must meet certain criteria: they must have produced an oeuvre of excellent literary, dramatic and theatrical quality and have an outstanding reputation. In addition, the work must be translated into several languages and performed in different European countries. In 2022, the advisory board was composed of 29 directors, authors, theatre managers, dramaturges, theatre critics and specialists from 21 countries (*named in the appendix*). Based on the advisory board's long list, the jury first decided on a shortlist of four candidates and, finally, picked the winner.

LENA LAGUSHONKOVA RECEIVES THE EUROPEAN NEW TALENT DRAMA AWARD 2022

The European New Talent Drama Award 2022 will be awarded to the Ukrainian playwright Lena Lagushonkova. The prize money of 25,000 euros is funded by the Heidelberg-based SRH Holding Foundation (SdbR), whose CEO is Prof. Dr. Christof Hettich.

This year's sole juror, Marius Ivaškevičius, Lithuanian playwright, essayist, prose author, screenwriter, journalist and director reflects on the winner: "Lena Lagushonkova, a young Ukrainian playwright from Luhansk – now living in Kyiv – writes in her plays about the life of a young woman against the backdrop of revolution and war. The short dialogues and monologues in her plays are imbued with spare, direct language and sharp-witted humour. Her trilogy consists of the plays *Gorky's Mother*, *PGT* and *My banner was pissed on by a cat*. The latter is about her efforts to lose her virginity during the Euromaidan Uprising in Ukraine. She recounts historical events in Ukraine and her life in the occupied territory of Luhansk. The narrative – based on fragments of everyday life – develops into an epic drama: war, poverty, devastation and the agonising recognition of people and their actions. It is at once comedy and tragedy.

Today, Lena lives in a terrible new reality – in a Kyiv besieged by Putin's army. I told her that she could expect a most pleasant surprise in the autumn. She replied: "Thank you very much. I hope I'll still be alive then." Before adding: "It is terrible. But I'm not crying."

Lena Lagushonkova was born in Stanytsia, Ukraine, and studied at the History Faculty of the Taras Shevchenko National University of Luhansk. She made her debut as a playwright in 2018 with her play *BAZA*, about women and prostitution, as part of the *Week of Current Art Festival* (Тиждень актуальної пьєсы). She works with Young Theatre and PostPlay Theatre and co-curates projects for the National Association of Theatre Activists of Ukraine. She emerged as a prizewinner from the *Week of Current Art* (Тиждень актуальної пьєсы) and *Drama.UA* competitions. Her work to date encompasses eight plays, including *Chapayev and Vasilisa*, about decommunisation and violence among teenagers, and the musical *Plague*, about the Great Plague in 17th-century London. (*Detailed biography in the appendix.*)

"As an education and healthcare company, we at SRH are interested in people and society – and a society is always characterised by its art and culture," explained Prof. Dr. Christof Hettich, CEO of SRH and donor of the New Talent Award. "We support the European New Talent Drama Award because it is often young artists who have a different, fresh, unconventional and particularly critical view of the state of society. They do not follow well-trodden paths, but forge new paths. Lena Lagushonkova is such a 'path creator', and she very much deserves this prize."

Patron Minister-President Kretschmann added: "I would also like to pay special tribute to the Ukrainian playwright Lena Lagushonkova. She is the recipient of the European New Talent Drama Award, kindly donated by SRH Holding (SdbR) and its CEO, Prof. Dr. Christof Hettich. With remarkably pithy language, her still young work impressively reflects everyday life against the background of recent Ukrainian history."

AWARD CEREMONY AND FESTIVAL WEEKEND 18 - 20 NOVEMBER 2022

The presentation of the European Drama Award 2022 to Caryl Churchill and the European New Talent Drama Award 2022 to Lena Lagushonkova will take place at the Schauspielhaus of the Stuttgart State Theatres on the weekend of 18 - 20 November 2022. The programme follows.

**EUROPEAN DRAMA AWARD 2022
CARYL CHURCHILL
AND
EUROPEAN NEW TALENT DRAMA AWARD 2022
LENA LAGUSHONKOVA**

FESTIVAL WEEKEND AND AWARD CEREMONY

**18 - 20 NOVEMBER 2022
SCHAUSPIELHAUS**

*Patron of the European Drama Award is Winfried Kretschmann,
Minister-President of the State of Baden-Württemberg, Germany.*



Baden-Württemberg
STAATSMINISTERIUM

*The European Drama Award is funded by the Ministry for Science, Research and the Arts and the
Friends of the Stuttgart State Theatres.*



Baden-Württemberg
MINISTERIUM FÜR WISSENSCHAFT, FORSCHUNG UND KUNST

*The European New Talent Drama Award is funded by SRH Holding (SdbR),
CEO Prof. Dr. Christof Hettich.*



Katharina Parpart
spokeswoman of Schauspiel Stuttgart / press office
katharina.parpart@staatstheater-stuttgart.de
www.schauspiel-stuttgart.de

APPENDIX

Award winners' biographies

The British playwright Caryl Churchill was born in London in 1938. She grew up in the Lake District and, during the Second World War, her family moved to Montreal, Canada. Churchill later returned to England to read English Literature at Oxford University, graduating in 1960. It was also while at Oxford that she began her literary career, writing three plays for student theatre groups. She went on to write plays for radio and television, then increasingly for the stage. In 1974, she became the first female playwright in residence at London's Royal Court Theatre, where she had her definitive breakthrough in 1979 with *Cloud Nine*. In this play she contextualised colonialism and feminism, had women play male roles and vice versa. In other plays, she explored her socialist convictions. She constantly developed the feminist position, and time and again her work radically broke with theatrical conventions. She earned numerous awards (including the Olivier Award and induction into the American Theater Hall of Fame) and left her mark on entire generations of British playwrights.

"Caryl Churchill has in some 40 plays – each a new creative challenge – developed her complex, innovative, visionary vocabulary ... England's most important playwright." (*Theatre heute*)

Her best-known plays include *Top Girls* (1982), *Serious Money* (1987), *Far Away* (2000), *A Number* (2002) and *Love and Information* (2012). Her work has been translated into nearly 40 languages; it has been performed around the globe, in over 45 countries, from Bulgaria to Australia, from Spain to China, Japan, Egypt, France, Germany, the USA and Canada, Slovenia, Italy, Estonia, the Philippines, much of South America and many more. In recent years Churchill has turned her attention to music and dance, collaborating with musicians and choreographers.

Lena Lagushonkova was born in Stanytsia in Ukraine and studied at the History Faculty of the Taras Shevchenko National University in Luhansk [LNU]. She made her first attempts at writing poetry and prose as a child, but destroyed all the texts from that time. She made her debut as a playwright in 2018 with her play *BAZA*, about women and prostitution, as part of the *Week of Current Art Festival* (Тижень актуальної пьєсы). She works with Young Theatre and PostPlay Theatre, participates in workshops and co-curates projects for the National Association of Theatre Activists of Ukraine. She won prizes in the *Week of Current Art* (Тижень актуальної пьєсы) and *Drama.UA* competitions. Her work to date

encompasses eight plays. Her play *Chapayev and Vasilisa*, about decommunisation and violence among teenagers, was performed at the Berezil Theatre in Kharkiv. The musical *Plague* – about the Great Plague of London in the 17th century – is to be performed at the V. Vasilko Theatre in Odessa. In addition, a production of the play *Hernán Cortés and the Others* about conquistadors and postcolonial trauma is in the pipeline. Lena Lagushonkova has worked on adaptations of texts by Borges, Bulgakov, Shakespeare and Márquez for theatres in Kyiv and other Ukrainian cities. In the near future, she would like to write about Luhansk, where she studied and lived for seven years, as well as about geishas and the St Bartholomew's Day massacre.

The International Advisory Board 2022

1	Arnaud Antolinos	France
2	Vincent Baudriller	France
3	Calixto Bieito	Spain
4	Karen-Maria Bille	Denmark
5	Stefan Bläske	Germany
6	Davide Carnevali	Italy
7	Ebru Nihan Celkan	Turkey
8	Constantin Chiriac	Romania
9	Maria Delgado	England, Spain
10	Roman Dolzhanskiy	Russia
11	Magnus Florin	Sweden
12	Oliver Frljić	Bosnia, Croatia
13	Paulien Geerlings	The Netherlands
14	Bettina Hering	Switzerland, Austria
15	Marius Ivaškevičius	Lithuania
16	Mel Kenyon	England
17	Mateja Kolečnik	Slovenia
18	Wolfgang Kralicek	Austria
19	Christoph Lepschy	Austria
20	Thomas Maagh	Germany
21	Kristina Matvienko	Russia
22	Sir Brian John McMaster	England
23	Fefa Noia	Spain
24	Biljana Srbljanović	Serbia
25	Simon Strauß	Germany
26	Nils Tabert	Germany
27	Itay Tiran	Israel
28	Krzysztof Warlikowski	Poland
29	Franz Wille	Germany

International advisory board members were not allowed to put forward playwrights with whom they had recently had a working relationship.