



Welcome to PEN International's weekly round-up newsletter: 21 May- 24 May

***PEN International's weekly on-line round-up with updates of news and alerts from the PEN Community. We highly recommend that you visit our site – www.pen-international.org, our new Facebook page and follow us on Twitter @pen_int** ***El nuevo semanal on-line de PEN International con novedades y alertas desde la Comunidad de PEN. Realmente recomendamos que visite nuestro sitio:www.pen-international.org también nuestros sitios de Facebook y Twitter @pen_int.** ***Le bulletin hebdomadaire de PEN International avec des mises à jour d'informations et d'alertes de la communauté PEN. Nous vous recommandons fortement de consulter notre site – www.pen-international.org ainsi que nos nouveaux sites Facebook et Twitter@pen_int.**

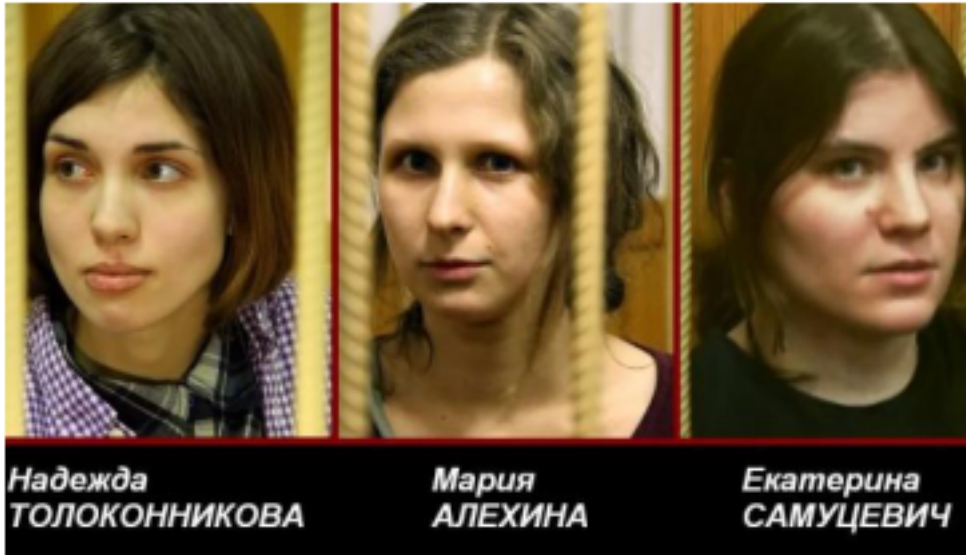
NEWS RELEASES [French](#) | [Spanish](#)



IN FOCUS: June 27th | Free the Word! At Poetry Parnassus

Southbank Centre in London and [English PEN](#) to put together a special series of Free the Word! literary events on 27 June 2012. Poets and writers from every Olympic Nation will be taking part in the event, including Seamus Heaney, Wole Soyinka, John Agard, Shailja Patel, Jack Mapange and Rafeef Ziadeh. To view the itinerary and full list of participants [click here](#).

24 May| Russia| Pussy Riot: Punk Moleben – put Putin away|



Vierge Marie, mère de Dieu, chasse Poutine, chasse Poutine, chasse Poutine Black robe, golden epaulettes/All parishioners crawl and bow/The phantom of liberty is in heaven/Gay-pride sent to Siberia in chains

Russian PEN published an open letter in support of the Pussy Riot band members who have been imprisoned for staging a 'punk prayer' in the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour. Maria Alyokhina, Ekaterina Samusevich and Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, the three members of the Russian Punk band 'Pussy Riot' have been detained for over eleven weeks, and are not due to be freed for at least another month, although the signs are that they are likely to be held much longer. For more information about the case and Pussy Riot's performance click [here](#). For information in French, Spanish, Dutch and Russia, we recommend the Free Pussy Riot website [here](#).

22 May | Azerbaijan | International freedom of expression coalition launches website ahead of Eurovision



“With seven journalists behind bars, Azerbaijan is among the top 10 global jailers of the press” -CPJ Europe and Central Asia Program Coordinator, Nina Ognianova.

The International Partnership Group for Azerbaijan (the IPGA), of which PEN International is member, has launched its website, Twitter and Facebook profiles in advance of the 57th Eurovision Song Contest which began on the 22 May in Baku, Azerbaijan. The IPGA is comprised of 15 international organisations that promote and defend freedom of information and expression in Azerbaijan. For more information,click here.

18 May |BAHRAIN | PEN among one hundred organisations to call to end assault on freedom of speechm and free all detained human rights defenders and netizens

Rather than implementing the recommendations of the November 2011 Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI), Bahraini authorities continue to violate international standards of human rights. PEN, along with one hundred other organisations sent a letter calling on the Bahrain Royal Family to immediately and unconditionally release all detained human rights defenders, bloggers and Twitter

activists including Abulhadi Al-Khawaja, Abduljalil Al-Singace, Nabeel Rajab, Zainab Al-Khawaja whom we believe are being detained solely as a result of their legitimate human rights work. To read the letter, please click [here](#).

16-20 May | Writers from 25 countries meet in Bled for 44th Pen International Writers for Peace Committee Conference



“As we look to the future, Writers for Peace continue to develop new, meaningful ways of responding to, influencing and shaping key debates of our times.” Laura McVeigh, Executive Director of Pen International.

At the 44th PEN International Writers for Peace Committee conference, PEN members and guests met to address how poetry and literature can contribute to sustainable development and the protection of cultural heritage. This year discussion focussed on interculturality, languages and their impact on the future of literature and included themes such as 'Transformation: new paths or the decline of Western rational civilization', 'Perennial Modernity and the future of writing', and 'Sharing with others as a right to peace'. For more information click [here](#).

PEN INTERNATIONAL BLOGS [French|Spanish](#)

24 May | In conversation with Rotimi Babatunde, Nominee for the 2012 Caine Prize for African Writing



Babatunde's story probes the narrativisation of history, the construction of reality and the ways in which the past intersects with and determines the present.

The short story 'Bombay's Republic' by Rotimi Babatunde, Chair of the Nigerian PEN Centre's Writers for Peace Committee, has been shortlisted for the prestigious Caine Prize for African Writing. Babatunde's 'Bombay's Republic' tells the story of an African soldier of the 'Forgotten Army', who served on the Burma front during the Second World War, before returning home as a decorated veteran. To read an interview with Babatunde and his story [click here](#).

23 May | News from the PEN Balkan Network



On May 8-11 2012 the first meeting of the PEN Balkan Network was held in Belgrade, Serbia. Formed at the 77th PEN International World Congress in 2011, the Network brings together PEN Centres in Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Kosovo, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia and Turkey. For more information [click here](#).

EVENTS [French|Spanish](#)

5 June | Girona Manifesto Presentation



Palau de la Generalitat, Barcelona, Spain

The Girona Manifesto on Linguistic Rights will be presented at the Palau de la Generalitat in Barcelona, the city where the idea for the Manifesto was born, at the World Conference on Linguistic Rights in 1996. Developed by the translation and Linguistic Rights Committee, the Girona Manifesto is a ten point document designed to be translated and disseminated widely as a tool to defend linguistic diversity around the world. At PEN International's 77th annual Congress the PEN General Assembly approved the Manifesto. To find out more [click here](#). To read the Girona Manifesto on Linguistic Rights in over forty languages [click here](#).



TAKE ACTION!

21 May | MEXICO | MEXICO – Another Journalist Murdered in Sonora State

The Writers in Prison Committee (WiPC) of PEN International is appalled by the news that yet another journalist has been murdered in Mexico. Marco Antonio Ávila García, a reporter for newspapers *Diario Sonora de la Tarde* and *El Regional de Sonora*, was found dead on 18 May 2012. The WiPC calls on the Mexican authorities to carry out a thorough investigation into this horrific crime, bringing those responsible to justice. To read more click [here](#).

Please share your centre news with us at penoffice@pen-international.org

Please send this newsletter onto other members of your centre and others who might be interested.

Por favor comparta las novedades de su centro con nosotros en penoffice@pen-international.org

Por favor envíe este boletín informativo a otros miembros de su centro y otros que podrían estar interesados.

Nous vous remercions de partager les informations de votre centre avec nous à l'adresse penoffice@pen-international.org

Veillez envoyer cette lettre d'information aux autres membres de votre centre et aux personnes qui pourraient être intéressées.

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