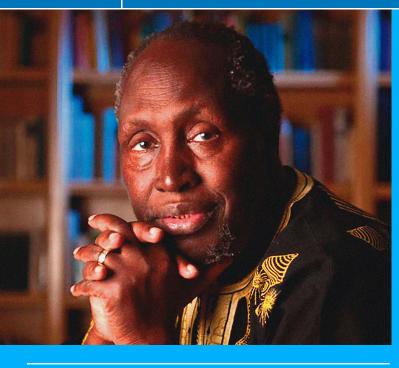
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Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o: Winner of the 31st Catalonia International Prize – 2019

#320 September 2020

XII legislature



Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o

Kikuyu writer, scholar and activist. Born in Kenya, 1938.

Valued as a social critic, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's work focuses on cultural and social issues affecting Kenya.

In 1962, the year Kenya gained independence, Ngūgī embarked on his literary career with a play entitled *The Black Hermit*.

From 1962 to 1977, he won acclaim in Kenya and internationally for the social criticism that came to characterise his work, which addresses cultural and social issues affecting Kenya.

He was imprisoned in 1977 but released a year later thanks to a campaign launched by Amnesty International. In 1978, he went into exile, first in Great Britain and later in the United States.

He currently lives in California, where he teaches at the University of California at Irvine.

www.ngugiwathiongo.com

2005 Claude Lévi-Strauss,

2006 Pere Casaldàliga,

2007 Edward O. Wilson,

and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi,

American biologist

2008 (shared)

Cynthia Maung,

Burmese politician

American video artist

2010 Jimmy Carter,

Burmese docto

2009 Bill Viola,

CATALONIA INTERNATIONAL PRIZE



The Catalonia International Prize is awarded annually to individuals whose creative work has made a notable contribution to developing cultural, scientific or human values around the world. Winners receive a cash prize of €80,000 and the sculpture *La clau i la lletra*, by Catalan artist Antoni Tàpies.

www.gencat.cat/pic

THE JURY

According to the jury, NGŨGĨ WA THIONG'O, one of the most prolific and widely recognised African authors, combines critical analysis of the social environment with empathetic and incisive treatment of both fictional characters and real people.

He has been awarded the prize for his daring and distinguished literary work and his defence of African languages, which is grounded in the idea that language embodies culture and collective memory.

PREVIOUS WINNERS



1989 **Karl R. Popper**, British philosopher



1990 **Abdus Salam**, Pakistani physicist



1991 **Jacques-Yves Cousteau**, French oceanographer



1992 **Mstislav Rostropòvitx**, Russian cellist



1993 **Luigi Luca Cavalli-Sforza**, Italian geneticist



1994 **Edgar Morin**, French philosopher



1995 (shared)

Václav Havel, Czech politician, and Richard von Weizsäcker, German politician



1996 **Yashar Kemal**, Turkish writer



1997 **Amartya Sen**, Indian economist



1998 **Jacques Delors**, French politician



1999 **Doris Lessing**, British writer



2000 **Abdallah Laroui**, Moroccan historian



2001 **Andrea Riccardi**, Italian historian and aid worker



2002 **Harold Bloom**, American essayist



2003 **Nawal al-Sa'dawi**, Egyptian writer and activist



2004 (shared)
Sari Nusseibeh, Palestinian
philosopher, and Amos Oz,



2011 **Haruki Murakami,** Japanese writer



2012 **Lula da Silva**, Brazilian politician



2013 (shared)

Gro H. Brundtland,

Norwegian politician.



and **Malala Yousafzai**, Pakistani activist



2014 **Desmond Tutu**, South African archbishop





Joan Massagué, Josep Baselga and Manel Esteller,



2017 **Costa-Gavras**, Greek film-maker



2018 **Vinton G. Cerf**, American engineer

MORE INFORMATION

- → JURY: https://presidencia.gencat.cat/ca/ambits_d_actuacio/premis/premi-internacional-catalunya/jurat/
- → WINNERS: https://presidencia.gencat.cat/ca/ambits_d_actuacio/premis/premi-internacional-catalunya/guardons-anteriors/
 - → RULES: https://presidencia.gencat.cat/ca/ambits_d_actuacio/premis/premi-internacional-catalunya/bases/