

Press release
Warsaw, October 3 2022

Marianna Kiyanovska

Laureate of The Zbigniew Herbert International Literary Award 2022

The Zbigniew Herbert Foundation announced the name of the Laureate of the Jubilee 10th Anniversary edition of the annual Zbigniew Herbert International Literary Award. The honour went to Marianna Kiyanovska, a Ukrainian poet and translator, author of a fearsome volume of poetry »The Voices of Babyn Yar«. The PZU Foundation is the strategic partner of the Zbigniew Herbert International Literary Award 2022.

“Kiyanovska has been one of the leading voices of Ukrainian poetry over the last two decades. Her work lies at the centre of our literary life, whilst all at once exerting a great influence on her fellow poets” – commented Yuri Andrukhovych, Ukrainian poet, writer and jury member, in justifying the verdict.

“In »The Voices of Babyn Yar« Kiyanovska dared achieve the impossible – she endeavoured to give the dead a voice. A lamenting wailing, charged with profound emotions, whereby Kiyanovska recounts a story of lives and crimes. Stories no less unique, than that of any human existence, at the same time frighteningly universal, relating to crimes committed in front of our very eyes” – underscored Tomasz Różycki, Polish writer and jury member.

The poet herself wrote: “I am probably the only one of all the award laureates, who could have been Zbigniew Herbert’s neighbour. If only we had met in time: my apartment in Lviv is located no more than four hundred metres from his house in Łyczakowska Street. Today Herbert’s house is threatened with shellfire, no less than my home; war, yet another experience that I share with Herbert”.

Marianna Kiyanovska was born on November 17th 1973 in the town of Nesterov, presently Zhovkva, near Lviv. She completed a degree in Ukrainian Studies at Lviv University, and her first work, a volume of poems titled »Інкарнація« (Reincarnation), was published in 1997.

In 2017 she published »Бабин Яр. Голосами« (The Voices of Babyn Yar), a poetry collection commemorating the victims of the mass murder committed in Babyn Yar near Kyiv during World War II, when nearly 34 thousand Jews died. The Polish version of »**The Voices of Babyn Yar**« was translated

by Adam Pomorski and received the European Poet of Freedom Award in June 2022 from the City of Gdansk. In addition to the translation into Polish by Adam Pomorski, »The Voices of Babyn Yar« had also been translated into English by Oksana Maksymchuk and Max Rosochinsky and published as a bilingual edition by Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute.

Kiyanovska has translated Polish poetry by Leśmian and Tuwim, as well as living poets of the younger generation. For her translation work, she was decorated with the *Zasłużony dla Kultury Polskiej* (Decoration of Honour, Meritorious for Polish Culture) by the Minister of Culture and National Heritage of the Republic of Poland. The Polish reader can also find Kiyanovska's poems in translations by, amongst others, Aneta Kamińska (in an anthology »Orange Pieces. New Ukrainian Poetry«), as well as by the above mentioned Adam Pomorski.

The Zbigniew Herbert International Literary Award is a distinction on the literary world stage – primarily in the field of poetry – conferred annually, for the last ten years, in recognition of outstanding artistic and intellectual achievements, inspired by the values and ideals which Zbigniew Herbert's work exemplifies. Existing Laureates include W.S. Merwin, Charles Simic, Ryszard Krynicki, Lars Gustafsson, Breyten Breytenbach, Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill, Agi Miszol, Durs Grünbein and Yusef Komunyakaa.

“The memory of his hometown stayed with him to his last days. I am convinced that he would be very pleased that the award in his name goes to a poet and fellow citizen of Lviv, who lives on Łyczakowska Street, where he also lived. But clearly that would not be most important. Herbert considered Russia a threat to European values, and would today side wholeheartedly with those heroically defending Ukraine. Finally, he would have equally very much appreciated Kiyanovska's poetic virtuosity as well as her ethical mindset. He himself wanted to make poetic imagination “an instrument of compassion” and thus, as he wrote: »revive the dead / preserve the covenant«. The author of »Babyn Yar« fulfilled that postulate – reflects Katarzyna Herbert, the poet's widow, and founder of the Foundation.

This year's Laureate was chosen by a jury, composed of poets, essayists, translators and publishers: Yuri Andrukhovych (Ukraine), Edward Hirsch (USA), Michael Krüger (Germany), Mercedes Monmany (Spain), and Tomasz Różycki (Poland).

The Award Presentation Ceremony will be held at the *Teatr Polski* in Warsaw on October 27th 2022. The ceremony will be transmitted live via the Zbigniew Herbert Foundation social media account.

Zbigniew Herbert Foundation Partners:

The PZU Foundation – Strategic Partner of the Zbigniew Herbert International Literary Award 2022;

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For more information about the Zbigniew Herbert International Literary Award go to:

- www.fundacjaherberta.com
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