

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



HARRY BELAFONTE
MALALA YOUSAFZAI
**AMBASSADOR
OF CONSCIENCE
AWARD 2013**

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AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



PRESENTED AT THE MANSION HOUSE,
DUBLIN, IRELAND
AN ART FOR AMNESTY AND
'BILL SHIPSEY PRESENTS' EVENT
ON BEHALF OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

AMBASSADOR OF CONSCIENCE
AWARD 2013

PRESENTED TO

HARRY BELAFONTE

AND

MALALA YOUSAFZAI

17 SEPTEMBER 2013
THE MANSION HOUSE
DUBLIN, IRELAND

SENDING A MESSAGE TO THE WORLD

SALIL SHETTY

Through the Ambassador of Conscience Award, we not only celebrate the bravery and personal commitment of individuals – we recognize their ability to inspire millions of other activists around the world.

This year, we are fortunate to have the opportunity to honour two extraordinary people who, through their courage and dedication to social justice, illustrate perfectly that human rights belong to all.

Harry Belafonte has used his talent to persuade, protest and bring about change. Whether fighting alongside Martin Luther King, Jr. for civil rights in the USA, with Nelson Mandela against apartheid in South Africa, raising money for relief efforts in Ethiopia or Haiti, or campaigning against the death penalty and Guantánamo – he’s been striving for change his entire life, and has at times been blacklisted for doing so.

Malala Yousafzai was, until last year, one of the many hundreds of human rights defenders whose names and fearless actions will probably never be known to most people in this audience. Malala’s demonstration of immense courage at a remarkably young age, asserting the rights of girls and women in a part of the world where some are eager to deny them, has taken away that anonymity and brought her message to the world. As she told the UN General Assembly in July: “I raise up my voice – not so that I can shout, but so that those without a voice can be heard. The extremists are afraid of books and pens. The power of education frightens them.” She refuses to be a victim. The world is in awe of her fearless determination to create change.

We thank both Harry Belafonte and Malala Yousafzai for their powerful work, and are proud to honour them here today.

Salil Shetty is Secretary General of Amnesty International

A RALLYING CRY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

BILL SHIPSEY

The initial spark for the creation of the Ambassador of Conscience Award in 2003 was Seamus Heaney's poem, *From the Republic of Conscience*, written for Amnesty almost 20 years earlier.

In this beautifully crafted work, Seamus expressed what is really at the heart of Amnesty and the human rights movement: that we are all, or at least should be, citizens of and advocates for a 'republic' with human rights and respect for the individual at the core of its value system.

And all our Amnesty Ambassadors of Conscience – from Václav Havel to Nelson Mandela to Aung San Suu Kyi – have shown the power of individuals to make and shape and change our world by their example and by their willingness to stand up for human rights.

I wanted the Ambassador of Conscience Award to be not only about paying homage to great leaders of the human rights movement, but also to serve as a rallying cry; a way of amplifying Amnesty's message to inspire the next generation of great human rights leaders. The fact that one of our recipients this year is a 16-year-old young woman is ample demonstration of the enduring power of the human spirit to exercise, express and enjoy basic human rights. And the fact that our other recipient has been a human rights activist for longer than Amnesty has been in existence is testament to the enduring nature of the human rights struggle. That he is also an artist of world renown – the first recording artist to sell over a million albums – adds to the pleasure in celebrating his life and work.

Bill Shipsey is the founder of Art for Amnesty and Executive Producer of the Ambassador of Conscience Award

HARRY BELAFONTE

Harry Belafonte's contribution to the breaking down of racial barriers in the world of American culture is legend – as is his immovable dedication to civil and human rights issues.

Harry's story is an inspirational and distinctive one – taking him from his young dreams in Harlem and Jamaica, to life as a globally successful musical artist, standing up for freedom and fairness through his art. Today, he is recognized around the world as a social activist, honoured many times over.

At the height of his career in the 1950s, Harry met a young Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on a visit to New York. From that day until the leader's assassination in 1968, he and Dr. King developed a deep and abiding friendship that, for Harry, has remained one of the most precious experiences of his life.

As well as his immeasurable contribution to the American civil rights movement, Harry was prominent in campaigning to end the oppressive apartheid regime in South Africa and for the release of his friend, Nelson Mandela. Later, he worked to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS in Africa and was made a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador in 1987.

Harry's work at home in America and in Africa has received international recognition. His accolades include The Albert Einstein Award from Yeshiva University, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Peace Prize and the Acorn Award from the Bronx Community College for his work with children. In 1989, he received the prestigious Kennedy Center Honors for excellence in the performing arts. He was the first recipient of the Nelson Mandela Courage Award and was honoured at the White

House in 1994 when President Clinton presented him with the National Medal of Arts for his contributions to the nation's cultural life. He has also been the recipient of numerous honorary degrees.

In 2011, Harry's long-awaited memoir *My Song* was published, accompanied by a stirring documentary film, *Sing Your Song*. As well as chronicling his extraordinary life, the film seeks to answer two profound questions about who we are and what meaning we find in our own commitments. Harry's commitment to ending prejudice and instilling social justice resonates as strongly today as ever – in the lives and hearts of millions. He has helped to change the world, and for that, we celebrate.

Dr. Martin Luther King said of his friend,

“Belafonte’s global popularity and his commitment to our cause is a key ingredient to the global struggle for freedom and a powerful tactical weapon in the Civil Rights movement here in America. We are blessed by his courage and moral integrity.”

MALALA YOUSAFZAI

Less than a year ago, Malala Yousafzai was shot by the Taliban while coming home on the school bus with her friends. She was 15 years old. Her crime was speaking out for the right of girls to get an education, and for that education to be provided and supported by their government.

The Taliban tried to silence her with their weapons, but as she stated in her address to the United Nations on 12 July (named Malala Day in her honour) – “they failed”. Since her attack, she has become internationally known as the bravest girl in the world, refusing to give in to continued threats, and instead resuming her campaign for education for all, a crusade she began when she was just 10 years old.

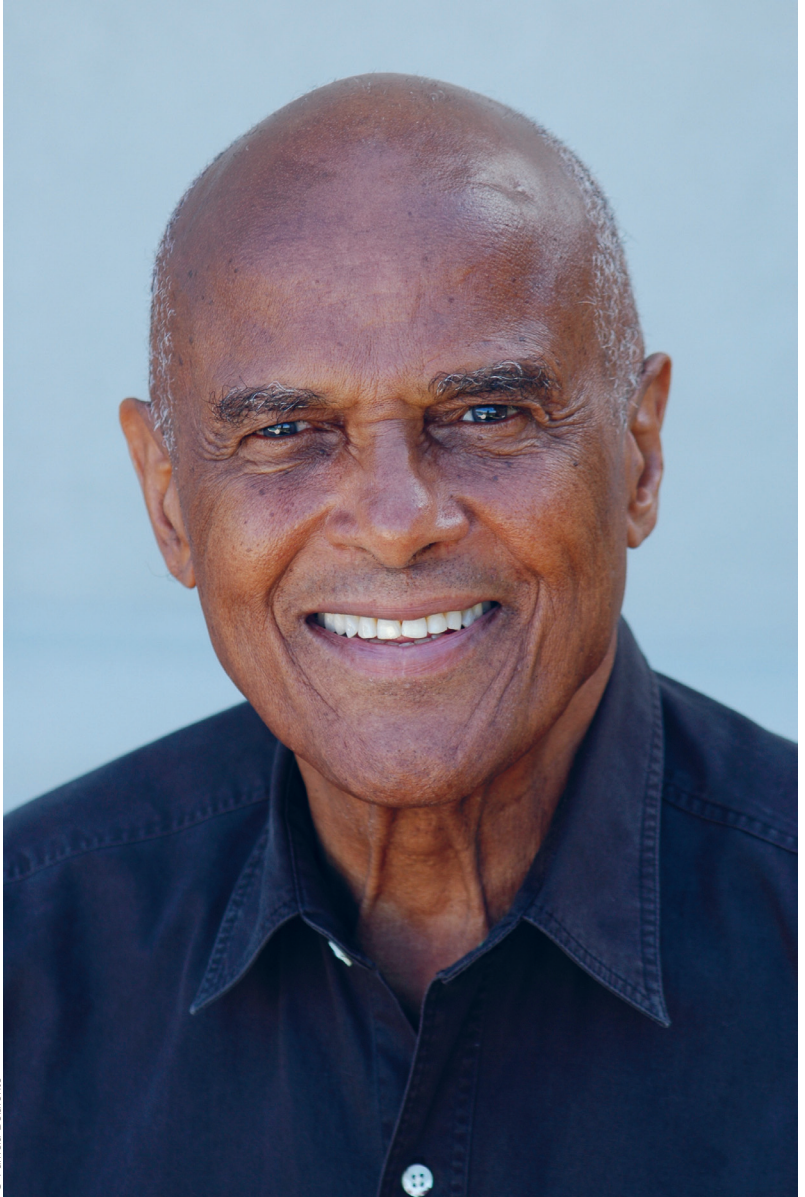
Born in 1997, Malala grew up in the Swat Valley in northern Pakistan with her parents and two brothers. Her father, Ziauddin, is an education activist and poet who founded his own school and supported his daughter’s right to an education. In 2009, Malala began to write a blog for BBC Urdu about life under Taliban rule. Using a pen name, she wrote about people’s fear of going to school and of speaking out, and continued to blog even as her friends and their families moved away from the region, as the violence escalated and schools were bombed. It was this steadfast refusal to be intimidated into silence that made her a target for the Taliban.

Now recovering from her injuries and living in Birmingham in the United Kingdom with her family, Malala is in school, and

remains an articulate, passionate and incredibly courageous young woman who has brought to the world's attention the right of all children to education – a right that is still denied to many.

Her efforts have seen her named one of 'The 100 Most Influential People in the World' in the April 2013 issue of *Time* magazine. She is also the winner of Pakistan's first National Youth Peace Prize, was nominated for the 2013 Nobel Peace Prize and the International Children's Peace Prize, and has had an international fund set up in her name – the Malala Fund – to help promote education for girls.

She is one of the youngest individuals to inspire such a global reaction and it is our great privilege to honour her today.



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CREDITING SEAMUS

BILL SHIPSEY

'If there is any substitute for love it is memory.'

Joseph Brodsky

When news of the death of my friend Seamus Heaney reached me while on vacation, my first sensation was, not surprisingly, one of shock. We had only recently spoken about his participation at this year's Ambassador of Conscience Award Ceremony, where he was to read his poem that inspired it.

My sense of shock was quickly followed by an overwhelming sadness at the loss of such a great man and the unutterable sorrow that Marie, his wife, and his children Catherine, Michael and Christopher, would be feeling. I thought also of all the great poems and essays that would now never be written by him.

But then the happy memories started to flood back. The time spent in his kitchen on the Strand Road; his fatherly encouragement and generosity for all my Art for Amnesty ventures; the marvellous speech he delivered for Václav Havel in Dublin in 2003; the essay he wrote for Amnesty to accompany his translation of Horace's Ode entitled 'Anything Can Happen'; the innumerable books he signed for me to give to Amnesty friends; his 'minding' of Aung San Suu Kyi when she visited Ireland last year; the letters and cards that we exchanged; his abundant courtesy, his unrivalled culture and great devotion to his art and to his family.

Though he often praised Marina Tsvetaeva's 'Art in the light of conscience', it was he who always wrote in that light. And though

he sometimes joked about the limiting impact of a happy childhood on his art, he was firmly of the view that it was a fallacy that suffering made for great art.

Like three of his Russian heroes and fellow poets, Mandelstam, Akhmatova and Tsvetaeva, who were great poets before the revolution in Russia, Seamus was a great poet before 'the troubles'. He would have become what he became even if none of the historical events that befell Ireland had happened in his lifetime because he was gifted. "Talent doesn't need history", his other Russian poet friend and fellow Nobel Laureate Joseph Brodsky said.

Seamus did not suffer from the sin of pride. But I know that he was proud of what his poem for Amnesty had inspired. He was gracious, kind, grateful, direct and generous to a fault with his time and with his art. The greatest living Irishman is no more and Amnesty has lost its most eloquent voice. But his words and memory will live on in those of us fortunate enough to have known him. We will try to 'walk on air against our better judgement' as he allowed and advocated in his Nobel Prize acceptance speech.

5 September 2013

FROM THE REPUBLIC OF CONSCIENCE

BY SEAMUS HEANEY

I

When I landed in the republic of conscience
it was so noiseless when the engines stopped
I could hear a curlew high above the runway.

At immigration, the clerk was an old man
who produced a wallet from his homespun coat
and showed me a photoraph of my grandfather.

The woman in customs asked me to declare
the words of our traditional cures and charms
to heal dumbness and avert the evil eye.

No porters. No interpreter. No taxi.
You carried your own burden and very soon
your symptoms of creeping privilege disappeared.

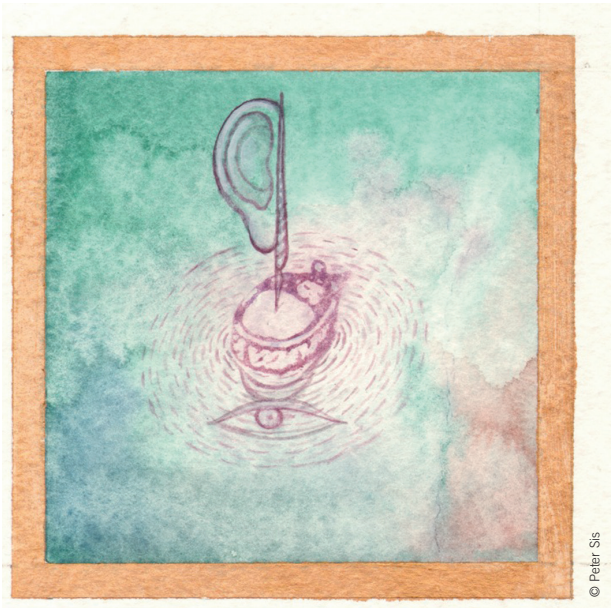
II

Fog is a dreaded omen there, but lightning
spells universal good and parents hang
swaddled infants in trees during thunderstorms.

Salt is their precious mineral. And seashells
are held to the ear during births and funerals.
The base of all inks and pigments is seawater.

Their sacred symbol is a stylized boat
The sail is an ear, the mast a sloping pen,
The hull a mouth-shape, the keel an open eye.

At their inauguration, public leaders
must swear to uphold unwritten law and weep
to atone for their presumption to hold office –



and to affirm their faith that all life sprang
from salt in tears which the sky-god wept
after he dreamt his solitude was endless.

III

I came back from that frugal republic
with my two arms the one length, the customs
woman having insisted my allowance was myself.

The old man rose and gazed into my face
and said that was official recognition
that I was now a dual citizen.

He therefore desired me when I got home
to consider myself a representative
and to speak on their behalf in my own tongue.

Their embassies, he said, were everywhere
but operated independently
and no ambassador would ever be relieved.

VOICES OF COMPASSION, DIGNITY AND COURAGE

CATHERINE HEANEY

Last year, when Aung San Suu Kyi was finally presented in person with her 2009 Ambassador of Conscience Award, she told the audience in Dublin's Bord Gáis Theatre, "You and others like you, and organizations like Amnesty International have helped us to keep our small wick of self-respect alive; you have helped us to keep the light". The image she chose is a potent one: the symbol of Amnesty International itself, the candle also echoes the ability of one small flame to ignite something much more powerful.

Today we are presenting the 2013 Award to two exemplars of that spirit and tenacity. Each of them has used their individual voice to speak out on the part of many – and, while separated by age, background and geography, they are united in their dedication to using education and art to overcome ignorance and brutality. This belief also lies at the very heart of Art for Amnesty and the Ambassador of Conscience Award – its name taken from a poem by my father, Seamus Heaney – the belief that art in all its forms has the power to forge a conscience and foster fundamental and political change within a society.

One person who has long understood this is Harry Belafonte who, as an artist, has dedicated his life to political activism and humanitarian causes. His inimitable voice was what first made the world listen, but he used it to do more than sing. He raised it to bear witness to injustice wherever he saw it, and in doing so, inspired others to follow him. Even today, it is impossible to overestimate his contribution to the international fight for human rights. Like his friends

Martin Luther King Jr. and fellow Ambassador of Conscience Nelson Mandela, he has been an illuminating figure not just to his own generation, but to all those that have come after.

And it is to Malala Yousafzai that today's young people may turn for inspiration and leadership. This extraordinary young woman's undaunted campaigning for the right of girls to education in her native Pakistan nearly cost her her life in a Taliban attack – but it also gave her a global platform on which to continue her crusade, and now her message rings out all the louder. As she told the UN General Assembly earlier this year, in a spellbinding address on her 16th birthday: 'Let us pick up our books and our pens – they are our most powerful weapons. One child, one teacher, one book and one pen can change the world.'

And so we are proud to honour these two keepers of the flame, Harry Belafonte and Malala Yousafzai, who speak to us with one voice, a voice of compassion, dignity and courage. Their example teaches us that the struggle for human rights crosses continents, spans generations and has the power to unite us all in the hope for a better future.

Catherine Heaney is an Amnesty International supporter and advocate for the Ambassador of Conscience Award

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A VERY SPECIAL

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Moira Shipsey

Sallie Shipsey

Rose Styron

Kevin and Muriel Thornton

Melanie Verwoerd

Wilme Verwoerd

Jochen Wilms

64 Wine

Ryanair

Waltons Music

Helena Casas

Derry & Sallyanne Clarke

PRESENTERS &

PERFORMERS

At time of going to press,
the following artists were
confirmed to perform

Bono

Joseph Calleja

Carl Carlton

Petula Clark

Jack Gleeson

Orla Guerin

Azar Nafisi

Esperanza Spalding

Roger Waters

Joseph Ntidendereza

Music Generation

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Tessa Lamb

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