



December 26, 2022

ANNOUNCING THE 2022 TOBY AWARDS

The Toby Awards have been celebrating theatrical excellence since 1997, promoting special recognition, irrespective of function, genre or geographic location within the global performing arts community based on individual impact to society.

As the Russian invasion into Ukraine continues to escalate and claim lives, it's a terrible tragedy for both Ukrainians and Russians, bringing great loss of human life, threatening both economies and security, and leading Russia to complete international isolation.

Today, two 2022 Toby Awards honors are bestowed upon:

ELENA KOVALSKAYA (Елена Ковальская) for her ***Outstanding International Courage***. Previously the Director of Moscow's Vsevolod Meyerhold State Theater and Cultural Center who at the very outbreak of the invasion of the sovereign country of the Ukraine in February 2022, without regard for her personal safety, resigned her high-profile Russian state position in protest of Putin's invasion in Ukraine. She was quoted as saying "*Friends, in protest against Russia's invasion of Ukraine, I'm resigning*". She continued, "*It's impossible to work for a murderer and collect a salary from him.*" She now teaches history of foreign theatre at the Russian Institute of Theatre Arts and directs its social theatre master's program.

<https://www.facebook.com/elena.kovalskaya>



DAVID FOSTER for his ***Outstanding Commitment to Humanity***. Now based in Bali, Indonesia, David had a long career as a sought-after Production Stage Manager of Broadway shows, within the USA and touring globally such as *Les Misérables*, *Annie Get Your Gun*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *The Who's Tommy* and *Anything Goes*, and for Radio City Music Hall, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Madison Square Garden Productions and Drei Haselnüsse für Aschenbrödel. In 2022 his undertaking, at his own considerable cost and risk, to volunteer for World Central Kitchen on the Poland-Ukraine border in Przemyśl for nearly 2 months assisting refugees fleeing the Ukraine is indicative of his selfless support of the humanitarian crisis on the edge of a war zone.

<https://www.facebook.com/AmbassadorDave>



Both **Ms Kovalskaya** and **Mr. Foster** join an elite club, not only as shining examples of humanitarian leadership, but currently with only 51 theatrical awards having been bestowed since 1997. The awards are unique since they recognize individuals that

typically would be overlooked by other global performing arts awards which have narrowly defined categories.

Throughout its 24-year history, awards have been presented at the end of each calendar year, except for 2020. Previous recipients include an eclectic mix of theatre creatives, performers, musicians, journalists, production, stage and general managers, marketing and public relations experts, logistics and production crew and more, each consistently showcasing theatrical excellence coupled with social, moral or ethical responsibility beyond their employment, coming from around the world such as Australia, Europe, UK, Canada, Brazil, Turkey, South Africa, Cuba, Argentina, Philippines, China, Russia, Poland, Indonesia and the USA.

For details, see:

<https://TobySimkin.com/TobyAwards/>

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