

PaykanArtCar Wins the 2022 Václav Havel International Prize for Creative Dissent

(Washington, D.C.) — PaykanArtCar has won the Human Rights Foundation's 2022 [Václav Havel International Prize for Creative Dissent](#). As one of three Havel Prize Laureates, the PaykanArtCar will be on exhibition at the Oslo Freedom Forum May 23-25. The Oslo Freedom Forum is a global gathering of some of the world's most notable human rights activists united in standing up to tyranny.

The Václav Havel International Prize for Creative Dissent is awarded in the name of the late Czech president, poet, playwright, dissident, statesman, and former HRF chairman Václav Havel. The Human Rights Foundation initiated the Havel prize in 2012. It is given to an individual or organization working "with bravery and ingenuity, [to] unmask the lies of dictatorship, and who put forth work that exemplifies tremendous courage and creativity," according to Human Rights Foundation's Chief Executive Officer Thor Halvorssen. Previous laureates include Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, South Sudanese activist and musician Emmanuel Jal, Saudi women's rights activist Manal al-Sharif, Chinese Dissident artist Badiucuo and the late Rwandan gospel musician and activist Kizito Mihigo.

[PaykanArtCar](#) identifies exceptional contemporary Iranian artists who are commissioned to use a particularly famous edition of the Paykan automobile as a canvas - turning a beloved symbol of Iranian national pride into a vehicle for human rights advocacy. The inaugural PaykanArtCar was painted by LGBTQ+ artist and activist, Alireza Shojaian, to highlight the persecution of LGBTQ+ people in Iran. A remarkable female Iranian artist will soon be commissioned to produce the next iteration of the PaykanArtCar, which will advocate for women's rights while shedding light on gender inequality, repression, and domestic abuse in Iran.

The Havel Prize ceremony will be broadcast live at oslofreedomforum.com on Wednesday, May 25.

Commenting on PaykanArtCar's selection as a 2022 Václav Havel Prize laureate, Dr. Hiva Feizi, Executive Director of PaykanArtCar, said:

"PaykanArtCar is honored to be recognized by the Human Rights Foundation as a voice for those who can't speak for themselves through creative dissent. Václav Havel's award speaks to the irrepressible power of art to fight oppression. We are delighted that the PaykanArtCar, once an automobile given by the Shah of Iran to the Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu, is now a vehicle for freedom of expression and human rights of all in Iran, regardless of race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation."

About PaykanArtCar

The PaykanArtCar unites the talents of contemporary Iranian artists with a beloved symbol of Iranian national pride — the Paykan automobile — to advocate for human rights and dignity in Iran. The non-profit, non-partisan PaykanArtCar is privileged to have acquired a historic Paykan Hillman Hunter limousine. Periodically, the PaykanArtCar will choose and commission an exceptional Iranian artist to use the vehicle as the canvas in support of the ongoing struggle in Iran for human rights. The purpose is simple: to use art and a beloved symbol of national pride to promote the rights of all Iranians no matter their race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation. For more information, visit paykanartcar.com.