

Julian Assange wins Martha Gellhorn journalism prize

WikiLeaks founder praised as 'brave, determined, independent' by judges

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WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange has won the Martha Gellhorn journalism prize. Photograph: Linda Ny Lind for the Guardian

Julian Assange, the WikiLeaks founder, has won the 2011 Martha Gellhorn prize for journalism.

The annual prize is awarded to a journalist "whose work has penetrated the established version of events and told an unpalatable truth that exposes establishment propaganda, or 'official drivel', as Martha Gellhorn called it".

"WikiLeaks has been portrayed as a phenomenon of the hi-tech age, which it is. But it's much more. Its goal of justice through transparency is in the oldest and finest tradition

of journalism," Martha Gellhorn prize judges said in their citation.

"WikiLeaks has given the public more scoops than most journalists can imagine: a truth-telling that has empowered people all over the world. As publisher and editor, Julian Assange represents that which journalists once prided themselves in – he's brave, determined, independent: a true agent of people not of power."

The judges also gave Martha Gellhorn special awards for journalism to Umar Cheema, of the International Times of Pakistan; Charles Clover, the Financial Times's Moscow correspondent; and Jonathan Cook, a freelance journalist based in Nazareth.

Judges for the 2011 awards were Dr Alexander Matthews, John Pilger, James Fox, Shirlee Matthews, Cynthia Kee and Jeremy Harding.

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