

## Winner Arts, Culture and Sports 2020:

### Gamze Elibol

**The winner in Arts, Culture and Sports is theatre director, Gamze Elibol from Turkey.**



Gamze Elibol is a trailblazing theatre director from Turkey whose impact goes way beyond the plays and musicals she stages.

The significant barriers to art and culture faced by people with disabilities – including herself – inspired Gamze to act, literally.

In 2002, she created the Art, Culture and Education Center for People with Disabilities (TEKSEM).

Gamze has staged over 500 plays and written eight musicals to raise awareness on topics including breast cancer and violence against women. Some of her work features self-designed puppets in wheelchairs. She is the first actor and female director with a disability in Turkish State Theatres.

Gamze was born in 1982. During her early childhood she was repeatedly discriminated against by her teachers because of her disability. After being rejected from the renowned 'Conservatory' in 2000 she instead began work as a writer at a theatre company.

Gamze now fights for the rights of people with disabilities by raising her voice and constantly advocating inclusion and accessibility.

Gamze has a powerful social media presence and continues her work and advocacy through many prominent platforms, including her own TED-Talk.