

Prix de l'Académie for Stéphane Hessel

The writer, former diplomat, and member of the French resistance Stéphane Hessel is this year's winner of the Prix de l'Académie de Berlin. The award is given to people who have made an outstanding contribution to enlivening and deepening rela-

tions between Germany and France. Born in Berlin in 1917, Hessel has campaigned for decades on behalf of freedom, human rights, and development cooperation, and most recently has reached a readership of millions with his two calls to arms: *Indignez-vous!* ("Time for Outrage!") and *Engagez-vous!* ("Get involved!").



School gets together with science

The Stiftung recognizes exceptional partnerships between schools and scientists. "These projects deserve to reach a wider audience, so others can learn from their example," said German Minister of Education Annette Schavan: www.bosch-stiftung.de/stw.

Memory of the nation

A "century bus" is currently touring Germany to record interviews with contemporary witnesses to some of the milestones in German history since 1945. The bus is part of a project called "Our History. Memory of the Nation," which aims to preserve eyewitness accounts for future generations. The videos are available to everyone on the Internet, but are aimed primarily at schools, universities, and people with an interest in history.



Left to right: Mayor Wolfgang Schuster presents Dieter Berg from the Robert Bosch Stiftung with commemorative plaques; Kurt Liedtke; responsible citizens take their position with roses; Nils Schmid, Christof Bosch; and responsible citizens Ulrike Folkerts and Robert Budzinski. Photos: Björn Hänsler

150 years of Robert Bosch

Birthday celebration pays tribute to the industrialist, citizen, and benefactor

Stuttgart | kv | On September 23, the Robert Bosch Stiftung celebrated the 150th birthday of Robert Bosch with 450 friends and partners. At midnight, Christof Bosch raised a glass to his grandfather. "We are grateful to you for the way you lived your life, for both your human and your material legacy," said Christof Bosch in his role as spokesman for the family. "May the work that you started continue to develop over the coming generations in a strong and meaningful way, through the inevi-

table difficulties and crises of the future." The theme for the birthday celebration in Stuttgart was "Taking on responsibility!" - the slogan adopted for the anniversary year. The celebration marked the culmination of the Responsible Citizens campaign. A hand-picked group of 150 citizens recorded their social and charitable activities on film over a period of 150 days and published their videos on the Internet. The result adds up to more than 400 short films illustrating the

diversity of the social projects in which people are involved. "Robert Bosch's values and principles remain as valid today as they ever were," said Kurt Liedtke, chairman of the Robert Bosch Stiftung board of trustees. "Just like Robert Bosch did during his lifetime, countless people in Germany today are taking on social responsibility." Other speakers at the celebration included Nils Schmid, Minister of Finance and Economics in Baden-Württemberg, and the for-

mer German Minister of Culture Michael Naumann. Greetings were sent by German Chancellor Angela Merkel and former President Richard von Weizsäcker. "As an industrialist, a responsible democrat, and a friend to humanity, Robert Bosch was an outstanding figure," Weizsäcker wrote. "In his thoughts and actions he was way ahead of his times. As we strive towards globalization and sustainability today, Robert Bosch is and remains a model and a benchmark for us."



Who does and doesn't work for Bosch? Actors from the Robert Bosch Red Bowler Company at one of their performances.

Faithfulness is about being faithful to the book

Interview with Gerhard Meier, winner of this year's Tarabya Prize for his translations of Turkish literature

Lyon | kv | A translator can kill a book with a poor translation, says Gerhard Meier. We spoke to him about the work and influence of a professional translator.

► At the end of October you won the Tarabya Prize for your translations from Turkish. How do you measure the success of a translation?

Nowadays I tend to think that you can judge whether a translation is successful or not simply by reading it - in isolation from the original. For example, a new translation of *Don Quixote* has just been published. I don't speak any Spanish, but I think the translation is absolutely outstanding.

► On what do you base that judgment?

Despite the scale of the work, the whole time I was reading it I had the feeling that if Cervantes had spoken German, this is exactly how he would have written the book. That feeling tells me that this is a successful translation. Conversely, when I read an unsuccessful trans-

lation, I notice that the translator has not managed to move far enough away from the original linguistic structures to create a piece that is true to the structures of the German language.

► That would suggest that the translator has a lot of influence.

There is an ongoing debate among translators as to whether it's possible for a translator to make a book better or worse. He can't really improve it, but he can certainly make it much worse. A poor translation can kill a book. In principle, however, a translator should convey the book as it is in the original language. That is what is meant by "faithfulness."

► How do you interpret this concept in relation to your own work?

Sometimes people misunderstand the idea of faithfulness and translators stick too closely to the original structures. To me, faithfulness is about being faithful to the book, not to the structures. In German, for example, important informa-

tion tends to come at the end of a sentence, whereas in English it is usually in the middle or at the start. If the translator becomes too closely attached to the structures of the source language, important information could end up being overlooked because it is in the wrong part of the sentence.

► Do you regard print runs and reviews as criteria for success?

Reviews occasionally include a brief mention of the translation. Often the critic will pick out a word and argue that it has been wrongly translated, but that suggests that the critic has not really thought about the translation. Sentence structure is a much more important element, for example. As for print runs, even poorly translat-

ed books can sell very well sometimes - while good translations may not do well at all.

► Why is that?

When a production company hires a well-known actor to appear in a movie, it costs more to make, but it has already caught the public's attention. The actor's high salary can be recovered. It doesn't work that way with books - most of their readers know

nothing about translators. So it makes no sense for a publisher to hire a specific translator and pay them particularly well.

► How important is it for you to have contact with the author?

So far I have got to know all of my authors personally, and I seek out this contact. During the translation process I am also in email contact with each author so that I can ask questions.

► The coexistence of Turks and Germans is something that is widely debated in Germany. Do you see yourself as a "bridge-builder"?

A translator is certainly a mediator. A German reader without a Turkish background who reads Turkish literature will change their view of Turkey. The media always latch on to the same issues, such as E.U. accession or Islam. They often paint a very exotic picture of Turkey. But anyone reading Turkish literature will discover that the people there experience the same joy and anguish in life as

those in Germany and other countries. My aim is for readers to understand what a "normal" country Turkey really is.

Support for translators

The Robert Bosch Stiftung regards translators as "literary bridge-builders" between cultures, which is why it supports literary translators as part of its commitment to international relations. The Stiftung awards grants, organizes workshops, and funds training programs and awards.

The Tarabya Prize is a joint project between the German Foreign Office, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Turkey, the Goethe Institute Istanbul, and the S. Fischer Stiftung within the framework of the Ernst Reuter Initiative for Intercultural Dialogue and Understanding. The prize recognizes outstanding translations of Turkish literature into German and vice versa.



Bridge-builder: Gerhard Meier was born in Germany in 1957 and now lives in France.