



Minister of Culture and Church Affairs Valgerd Svarstad Haugland:
Willy Brandt Prize 2003

Herr Bürgermeister Saxe, Herr Botschafter Godal, sehr geehrter Preisträger, meine Damen und Herren!

Es ist mir eine große Ehre und Freude, heute an dieser Veranstaltung teilnehmen und den Willy-Brandt-Preis überreichen zu können.

Bevor ich mich dem diesjährigen Preisträger zuwende, möchte ich meine besondere Freude zum Ausdruck bringen, dass die Preisverleihung hier in der Hansestadt Lübeck stattfindet.

Im vergangenen Jahr wurden die Preisträger in der Hansestadt Bergen geehrt. Da lag es natürlich sehr nahe, Lübeck für die diesjährige Veranstaltung auszuwählen. Schon während der Hansezeit bestanden enge Beziehungen zwischen Bergen und Lübeck. Die lübeckischen Gesetze galten auch in der westnorwegischen Stadt. Und noch 1920 wurden in der Maria-Kirche in Bergen Gottesdienste auf Deutsch abgehalten. Unverkennbar ist nicht zuletzt der bedeutsame Einfluss der deutschen Sprache auf den Bergener Dialekt.

Willy Brandt was born in Lübeck, so it is special to be in this city to award the Willy Brandt Prize for 2003. Most of you know that Willy Brandt left Lübeck at the age of 20, and came to Norway as a political refugee. When he decided to involve himself in German politics in January 1948, he was the press attaché at Norway's military mission in Berlin. So, when the Norwegian Nobel Committee awarded the Nobel Peace Prize to Brandt in 1971, it was a big day for Norwegians and Germans alike.

As cultural minister, I should point out that Willy Brandt is not the only Nobel Prize winner among the sons of Lübeck. Thomas Mann received the Nobel Prize for literature in 1929. And in 1999, Günter Grass won the same prize.

Günter Grass is Germany's best-known living author, and he is highly respected in Norway. That makes him an important cultural link between our two countries. It is therefore a great pleasure for me to be able to award today's prize in the company of Günter Grass.

We have a long tradition of Norwegian literature being translated into German. This tradition stretches from Ibsen and Hamsun to Gaarder, with *Sophie's World*. It is our good luck that Günter Grass has been translated into Norwegian throughout his career – from his novelistic debut, *The Tin Drum*, to the controversial *A Broad Field* in 1995, and now "Crabwalk."

And so, to this year's Norwegian prize-winner: The Willy Brandt Prize for 2003 is awarded to Nils Morten Udgaard. Congratulations!

Udgaard is the very prominent foreign editor of one of Norway's largest newspapers, *Aftenposten*. There, he has shown a special interest in European and German issues, and has helped put Germany back in the centre of our view of Europe.

Before joining *Aftenposten*, Udgaard wrote his doctoral thesis on "Great Power Politics and Norwegian Foreign Policy." For many years now, he has been at the heart of the newspaper's foreign coverage. He spent two periods as *Aftenposten*'s correspondent in Bonn, where he gained valuable insight into German and European politics. From 1984 to 1986, Udgaard served in the Norwegian Prime Minister's Office as state secretary for international political issues. In 1991, he was named professor of modern European history at the University of Bergen - a position he has combined with his editorial duties at *Aftenposten*.

NORWEGISCH-DEUTSCHE WILLY-BRANDT-STIFTUNG
DEN NORSK-TYSKE WILLY BRANDT STIFTELSE



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In his journalism, his teaching and other activities, Udgaard deserves credit for focusing on German and German-Norwegian issues, during a period when the Norwegian public was often captivated by events elsewhere.

Today, the reunited Germany is a leading nation in the middle of Europe. Increasingly, we feel our attention being drawn there. In a way, we have rediscovered Germany.

I say "rediscovered" because Norwegians have always seen the German area as a bridge to all things European. Over this bridge many of the important values that define Norwegian society have come. I'm thinking, not least, about the influence of Martin Luther. The values we share identify us as part of a larger, northern European cultural area. Over this same bridge, Germany has received cultural stimuli from Norway. The Norse sagas and our old myths helped strengthen Germany's national identity in the 1800s. Since then, the two-way exchange of culture has been quite lively.

Germany is also becoming one of Norway's most important political partners in Europe. In a speech in Berlin four years ago, Prime Minister

Bondevik said: "Building on what we have achieved over many years of common history, we should - on the threshold to the new millennium - look ahead and move toward a strategic partnership between Norway and Germany."

It's no coincidence that his first foreign destination - after winning back the prime-minister post in 2001 - was Berlin.

I see the Willy Brandt Prize as a good way to celebrate the relationship between our two countries. And I see this year's winner, Nils Morten Udgaard, as an excellent person to represent the deep bond between us.

Once more, let us congratulate him!