



## **NORDIC COOL 2013**

*The Kennedy Center*

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Nordic Noir and the Scandinavian crime in Washington**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** –Nordic Cool 2013 presents an extensive range of literature panels introducing the audience to internationally acclaimed Danish, Greenlandic and Faroese authors, among them Christian Jungersen, Naja Marie Aidt and Lene Kaaberbøl. Among the topics is the emergence of Nordic Noir and the Scandinavian crime novel.

#### **Literature Panel: Nordic Crime: Ice, Volvos, and Murder**

Is Nordic noir a voice of its own? This discussion features some of the region's foremost crime novelists offering their own takes on the success of the genre and its unique characteristics. With Stieg Larsson, the Nordic crime novel achieved its international breakthrough. But is Nordic noir a voice of its own?

Moderator Andrew Nestingen, Associate Professor of Scandinavian Studies at the University of Washington, leads a discussion with the region's foremost crime novelists offering their own takes on the success of the genre and its unique characteristics. Panelists will include Johan Theorin (Sweden), Lene Kaaberbøl (Denmark), Agnete Friis (Denmark), Vidar Sundstøl (Norway), and Jarkko Sipilä (Finland).

**Lene Kaaberbøl** writes fantasy and crime novels, occasionally with co-author Agnete Friis. Notable works include *The Shamer Quartet* (The Shamer's Daughter, The Shamer's Signet, The Serpent Gift, and The Shamer's War), and the Nina Borg crime series (The Boy in the Suitcase, Invisible Murder, and Nightingale Death), co-authored by Agnete Friis. Many of Kaaberbøl's young adult fantasy novels are set in medieval times or other worlds, while her crime stories are mainly set in her native Denmark

*Nordic Crime: Ice, Volvos, and Murder* is free and takes place Sunday March 3 in the Terrace Gallery.

#### **Literature Panel: Family -Secrets and Truths**

Is the family falling apart? The family has always been the cornerstone of Nordic literature. Whether the bloody feuds of the Icelandic family sagas or the heated marriage strife of Strindbergian drama, the internal dynamics of the family stand at the center of the Nordic literary tradition. Do revelations of painful secrets and uncomfortable truths both unsettle familiar relationships and propel the modern individual forward? Is the familiar framework still shoring up the Nordic novel or asking readers to rethink assumptions about the family entity?

Marianne Stecher-Hansen of the University of Washington's Department of Scandinavian Studies speaks to three authors exploring the individual in relation to family today -Christian Jungersen (Denmark), Hallgrímur Helgason (Iceland), and Anne Swärd (Sweden).

**Christian Jungersen** is the author of two award-winning novels, *Krat* (Thickets), and the international bestseller, *The Exception*. He made his literary debut in 1999 with the novel *Krat*, which was critically acclaimed, won the Best First Novel award in Denmark, and became a Danish bestseller. *The Exception* entered the Danish Top Ten list upon its publication in October 2004 and stayed on this list for more than 18 months. It has won two Danish major literary prizes and has been shortlisted for major prizes in the United Kingdom, France, and Sweden.

*Family - Secrets and Truths* is free and will take place Saturday March 2 at 1:30pm in the Terrace Gallery.

#### **Literature Panel: Prize-Winning Literature**

The Nordic Council Literature Prize is awarded for a work of literature written in one of the languages of the Nordic countries that meets a "high literary and artistic standard." This panel features some recent winners discussing their works. The Nordic Council Literature Prize is awarded for a work of literature written in one of the languages of the Nordic countries that meets a "high literary and artistic standard." Awarded each year since its establishment in 1962, the prize serves to reveal the wide variety of voices which all are part and parcel of the Nordic literary world.

Moderator Susan Harris, editorial director of Words Without Borders, will speak with some recent winners, including Merethe Lindstrøm (Norway) and Naja Marie Aidt (Denmark), presenting their work and discussing the idea of a common Nordic literary tradition.

**Naja Marie Aidt** is an author and poet who made her debut as a writer in 1991 with her collection of poems, *Så længe jeg er ung* (As Long as I'm Young). Since then, she has published eight additional collections of poetry and three collections of short stories. She has written several plays, children's books, and the screenplay for the movie *Strings* (2005). She has received a succession of awards, most recently the Critics' Choice Award (2006) and the Nordic Council's Literature Award (2008) for her collection of short stories entitled *Bavian* (Baboon).

*Prize-Winning Literature* is free and takes place Sunday March 3 at 6:30pm in the Terrace Gallery.

### **Literature Panel: Poetic Expressions of Nordic Origins - Reflections Today**

Nordic mythology has been a literary inspiration for numerous Nordic writers. This event explores Nordic mythology in contemporary Nordic poetry. Meet three poets from the Åland Islands, Greenland, and Iceland who are inspired by traditional Eskimo motifs, mystical natural images, historical personages, and locations - Inger-Mari Aikio-Arianaick (Åland), Jessie Kleemann (Greenland) and Gerður Kristný (Iceland).

**Jessie Kleemann** is a poet, dancer, and video and performance artist. She lives and works in Copenhagen. In her poems, the first of which appeared in her 1997 book, *Taalla*, traditional Eskimo motifs meet the globalized present. In this way, Kleemann's poetry, written in Greenlandic and Danish, brings the image world of the Eskimos up to date for the 21st Century. From 1984 to 1991, Kleemann was the director of the art school in Nuuk. In addition to her many other commitments, she has established a poetry festival in Greenland, written film scripts, and has her own TV show.

*Poetic Expressions of Nordic Origins - Reflections Today* is free and takes place March 6 at 7:00pm in the Terrace Gallery.

### **Literature Panel: In the Cracks Between the Lines: Magic Realism of the North**

Nordic realism? Only on the surface. For in the cracks between the lines of Fagerholm, Kamban, and Ómarsdóttir, myths, sagas, and strange worlds peer forth. In the fissures of these texts are revealed what is at odds, mystical, peculiar, and, on occasion, magical. With inner and outer worlds morphing, the magic realists of the North challenge the world as we know it. Author Keith Donohue leads a discussion with accomplished authors including Monika Fagerholm (Finland), Hanus Kamban (Faroe Islands), and Kristín Ómarsdóttir (Iceland).

**Hanus Kamban** is a novelist and poet. He started out translating English and American fiction, and has penned both fiction and non-fiction. He is however primarily known for his short stories, in which he fuses psychological realism with magical realism and fantasy. In some of his stories, played out against an austere, rural backdrop, he deals with religious and sexual repression. In others, he makes use of old Faroese legends or draws on Europe as a setting, alluding to continental art and literature. His short novel *Goldgirl* was nominated for the 2012 Nordic Literature Prize. Other notable works include a biography of the poet JHO Djurhuus. Much of Kamban's work focuses on the impact of the abrupt modernization of the Faroe Islands after the Second World War and on Faroese oral tradition. Kamban has received the M.A. Jacobsen's Literature Prize twice and the Faroese Cultural Prize in 2004.

*In the Cracks Between the Lines: Magic Realism of the North* is free and takes place March 5 at 7:00pm in the Terrace Gallery.

### **Nordic Cool 2013**

Nordic Cool 2013 is a Nordic cultural festival in Washington. Nordic Cool 2013 is presented by the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in co-operation with the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Nordic embassies in Washington, as well as the national cultural agencies in the respective Nordic countries, as well as Greenland, Åland and the Faroe Islands.