

The Fosse Lecture will be given by Jean-Luc Marion

The French philosopher and theologian Jean-Luc Marion has been invited to give the first Fosse Lecture, and the German translator Hinrich Schmidt-Henkel has been awarded the Fosse Prize for Translators in 2025. The Fosse Prize will be among the largest of its kind in the world.

At the invitation of the Royal House of Norway, the Fosse Lecture and the award ceremony for the Fosse Prize will take place at the Royal Palace on Thursday 24 April 2025.

The government has established the prize and the lecture in honour of the Nobel Prize-winning author Jon Fosse, and the event is organized by the National Library of Norway. This is the first time the Fosse Lecture will be held and the Fosse Prize for Translators will be awarded. The event will be annual.

Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Mette-Marit is the royal patron for the two distinctions.

‘With this event, we want to highlight the power of literature and its role in society. We now have an excellent starting point for creating a new cultural venue that encourages dialogue about literature both in Norway and internationally’, said Minister of Culture and Equality Lubna Jaffery.

The lecturer and the translator are internationally renowned in their respective fields.

Lecturer: Jean-Luc Marion

Jean-Luc Marion (b. 1946) is a French philosopher and theologian who is one of the “immortals” of the French Academy. He is professor emeritus at the Sorbonne and the University of Chicago, and a former student of Jacques Derrida.

‘Jean-Luc Marion is one of Europe’s leading intellectuals’, said National Librarian Aslak Sira Myhre. ‘His perspective will help expand and inspire the contemplation of literature in Norway. We are very pleased that Marion has agreed to give the very first Fosse Lecture’.

Marion has written about visual art and has a close relationship with literature. As a theologian and philosopher, he can view literature from a unique standpoint, which aligns with the aim to emphasize contemplation and explore literature from various perspectives and with different voices.

‘He creates a very solid space for literature when it comes to understanding and experiencing life or learning something, for example about love, and about God for that matter’, said Jon Fosse.

The National Library has appointed the lecturer based on input from several national and international actors.

Prize Winner: Hinrich Schmidt-Henkel

The German translator Hinrich Schmidt-Henkel (b. 1959) is deeply invested in Norwegian literature and has translated a number of Norwegian authors, including Kjell Askildsen, Jon Fosse, Henrik Ibsen, Ruth Lillegraven, Cecilie Løveid, and Tarjei Vesaas.

'Germany has traditionally been the most important country for translated Norwegian literature, and for many years Hinrich has been the most important German translator, so I think this is a completely obvious choice', said Jon Fosse.

The prize winner is appointed by the National Library and Jon Fosse in consultation with NORLA (Norwegian Literature Abroad). NORLA works to advance the export of Norwegian literature and is the professional council for the awarding of the Fosse prize.

'Schmidt-Henkel has an impressive and versatile bibliography in prose, drama, poetry, and children's books. The role he has played for Norwegian literature abroad is in a league of its own', said NORLA Director Margit Walsø.

The Fosse Lecture and the Fosse Prize for Translators will further establish Norway's position on the international literary map.