

News Release

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October 21, 2016

Kakehashi Literature Prize Presented in Japan

- **Ilma Rakusa's "Mehr Meer" and translator Fuminari Niimoto recognized**
- **Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, grants five literary prizes worldwide**

Tokyo, Japan, October 21, 2016 – Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, a leading science and technology company, and the Goethe Institut in Tokyo presented yesterday evening the Kakehashi Prize of Merck Ltd. Japan, a subsidiary of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany. Ilma Rakusa's memoir entitled "Mehr Meer" (More of the Sea) and translator Fuminari Niimoto each received prize money of € 10,000. With the literature prize, every two years the Goethe Institute and Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, recognize German authors whose literary work is to be made accessible to a Japanese readership.

In the tradition of corporate responsibility, Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, has promoted literature for generations. The company aims to foster cross-border dialogue between the business world and culture with targeted support of literature projects in different countries. In addition to health and the environment, culture is a strategic sphere of activity of the company's sustainability efforts.

The jurors of the Kakehashi literature prize unanimously chose Ilma Rakusa's memoir entitled "Mehr Meer" from 2009 as well as her translator Fuminari Niimoto. The chairman of the jury, Professor Masahiko Tsuchiya (Nagoya Gakuin University) said his decision was based on the growing importance of the concept of "transnationalism" in the global era. According to the jury, Ilma Rakusa is one of the most important translational authors in the German-speaking world. Her main work "Mehr Meer" is characterized by three aspects: the beauty of the lyrical

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language, the genre-transcending relevance of the novel, and the multicultural experiences. "The reader travels with the narrator through various countries of Europe, shares her experiences and follows her collection of childhood memories. Readers from Japan randomly empathize with the similarities and differences between European and Japanese history," said Tsuchiya. The nine-member jury of the Kakehashi literature prize consists of Japanese Germanists as well as representatives of the Goethe Institute and Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany. The Japanese word "kakehashi" means frontier crossing or bridge building.

The Kakehashi Award is one of five literature prizes that Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, currently awards or promotes worldwide. Building bridges between cultures is also at the forefront of the literature awards in Russia (Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, Translation Award) and India (Tagore Award of Merck India, a subsidiary of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany). In Germany, the company sponsors the Johann Heinrich Merck Award for Literary Critique and Essay of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany. With the Premio Letterario of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, the company recognizes authors in Italy who build bridges between literature and science with their works.

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