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## News Release

July 15, 2015

### **13th "Premio Letterario of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt Germany" Honors Authors for Creating Bridges Between Science and Literature**

- **Maylis de Kerangal and David Quammen win renowned literature award for building bridges between literature and science**
- **Karl-Ludwig Kley: "Literature makes us reflect upon and query our own life and environment."**

Rome, Italy, July 15, 2015 – The French author Maylis de Kerangal and the American science author and writer David Quammen were each awarded the literature prize "Premio Letterario of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany" in Rome on Tuesday evening. The jury, which comprises 19 international scientists, literary experts and journalists, based its decision on the ability of both authors to "impressively convey scientific subjects in literary style." Each prize is worth € 10,000. Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, a leading company for innovative, top-quality high-tech products in healthcare, life science and performance materials, granted the renowned literature prize for the 13th time.

Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany has been awarding the "Premio Letterario" since 2003 in recognition of authors who build bridges between literature and science, thus making scientific topics accessible to a broad audience. Karl-Ludwig Kley, Chairman of the Executive Board and CEO of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, also emphasized in his address in Rome to around 400 guests from the worlds of art, culture, industry, and science the ability of literature to stimulate scientific and above all social changes. "The ability of literature to engage us in critical thinking is extremely important for

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#### Merck KGaA

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scientific progress. Yet I believe it also has an even more important social role. Literature is able to point out trends to us that already exist in our society but that we possibly may not be aware of. Literature makes us reflect upon and query our own life and environment."

Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany promotes literature as part of its good corporate citizenship. At the end of 2014, the company selected culture, in addition to health and the environment, as a strategic sphere of activity for its sustainability efforts. As a research-based high-tech company, Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany sees culture as an opportunity to inspire people and to open their eyes to new possibilities. The "Premio Letterario" is one of four literature prizes that Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany awards or promotes worldwide. The company has been sponsoring the Johann Heinrich Merck Award of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, which builds bridges between literature and empathetic understanding, since 1964. By contrast, building bridges between cultures is at the forefront of the literature awards in Japan (Kakehashi Prize of Merck Ltd. Japan, a subsidiary of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany) and India (Tagore Award of Merck India, a subsidiary of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany), which Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany grants in cooperation with the Goethe-Institut.

### **The winners:**

**David Quammen**, who was born in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1948, was recognized for his book "Spillover: Animal Infections and the Next Human Pandemic". The jury praised the American journalist as "a lively, well-read author and a brilliant, sharp-minded chronicler with a consistently entertaining style." Spillover is "a significant, and in many parts a notable book." Quammen describes in it how quickly AIDS, SARS and Ebola, whose pathogens once spilled over from animals to humans, have spread. In the jury's opinion, on the one hand the science writer confirms Darwin's theories, while on the other hand he clearly shows "how concrete the hope is today of conquering pandemics."

**Maylis de Kerangal** is one of the most important authors of contemporary French literature. According to the jury, in her book "Réparer le vivant" (Repairing the Living) she



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explains "the complex topic of organ donations with sharp insight." Born in 1967 in Toulon, France, Maylis de Kerangal describes the 24-hour race against the clock to save a heart. After a car accident, doctors diagnose the clinical death of a young man. At the same time, they determine that he is a suitable organ donor. According to the jury, de Kerangal, "gives a voice to the pulsating epic of a heart and explores every corner of the universe with the elegance of great literature."

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Merck KGaA of Darmstadt, Germany, is a leading company for innovative and top-quality high-tech products in healthcare, life science and performance materials. The company has six businesses – Biopharmaceuticals, Consumer Health, Allergopharma, Biosimilars, Life Science and Performance Materials – and generated sales of € 11.3 billion in 2014. Around 39,000 employees work in 66 countries to improve the quality of life for patients, to foster the success of customers and to help meet global challenges. Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, is the world's oldest pharmaceutical and chemical company – since 1668, the company has stood for innovation, business success and responsible entrepreneurship. Holding an approximately 70% interest, the founding family remains the majority owner of the company to this day. Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany holds the global rights to the Merck name and brand. The only exceptions are Canada and the United States, where the company operates as EMD Serono, EMD Millipore and EMD Performance Materials.