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News Release

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Johann Heinrich Merck Award 2014 Goes To Carolin Emcke

- **Publicist to receive prize worth € 20,000 in October**
- **German based company grants renowned literature award for the 50th time, underpinning its commitment to corporate responsibility and history**

Darmstadt, June 6, 2014 – Carolin Emcke is the winner of the Johann Heinrich Merck Award for Literary Critique and Essay 2014. The German Academy for Language and Poetry will be presenting the prize worth € 20,000 together with the Georg Büchner Prize at its Autumn Conference on October 25, 2014 in Darmstadt. The Johann Heinrich Merck Award is one of the most prestigious distinctions for literary critics and essayists. The German based company Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, initiated the award in 1964 in memory of the writer and literary critic Johann Heinrich Merck, who lived in Darmstadt from 1741 to 1791. “Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, sees the promotion of literature as part of good corporate citizenship,” said Karl-Ludwig Kley, Executive Board Chairman of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany. “The award reflects our centuries-old tradition of supporting art and culture.” Underpinning its commitment to corporate responsibility and history, the company is granting the renowned literature award for the 50th time in 2014 (the award was not presented in 1965).

According to the German Academy of Language and Poetry, Carolin Emcke's books “make literary masterpieces into lessons in empathy.” Emcke's reportages and essays reflect “extreme experiences of violence and exclusion in Germany as well as in war and conflict zones throughout the world.” According to the jury, her books interlink “keen observation and analytical precision with storytelling power.”

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Carolin Emcke, born on August 18, 1967 in Mülheim an der Ruhr, Germany, lives and works as a freelance publicist in Berlin. Since 1998, she has been traveling to crisis regions around the world, including Kosovo, Afghanistan, Gaza, the West Bank, Israel, Iraq, and Pakistan. Her publications include: *Von den Kriegen - Briefe an Freunde* (2004), *Stumme Gewalt - Nachdenken über die RAF* (2008), *Wie wir begehren* (2012), *Weil es sagbar ist - Zeugenschaft und Gerechtigkeit* (2013). Emcke has received multiple awards, including the Theodor Wolff Prize 2008, Journalist of the Year 2010, and most recently the Ulrich Wickert Journalist Award for Children's Rights in 2012.

Johann Heinrich Merck, whom the literature prize was named after, founded a publishing house in 1771 that initially produced inexpensive reprints of western European literature in the original language, and then added contemporary German works as well. Merck's home was the gathering point of the "Darmstädter Kreis", a group of writers that promoted literary sentimentalism and included Johann Gottfried Herder and Franz Michael Leuchsenring. Merck had friendly ties to Goethe in his young years.

The Johann Heinrich Merck Award is one of four literature prizes that Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, currently grants or promotes worldwide. Since 2003, the company has been awarding the Premio Letterario in Italy, which recognizes authors for building bridges between literature and science. Furthermore, Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, recently granted the Merck Tagore Award in India for the second time to promote German-Indian cultural exchange. In October of this year, Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, and the Goethe-Institut in Tokyo will be presenting the first Merck Kakehashi literature prize, the aim of which is to make contemporary German literature accessible to a wider readership in Japan.

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