

62nd Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting

PRESS RELEASE

Sketches of Science: Photo sessions with Nobel Laureates

Stockholm, 8 June 2012. Today is the inauguration ceremony of the new exhibition “Sketches of Science: Photo sessions with Nobel Laureates” at the Nobel Museum in Stockholm. It features 50 portraits of Nobel Laureates, produced by the German photographer Volker Steger. The display is enriched with interviews, video footage, and digital presentations related to the Nobel Laureates and their discoveries.

In the presence of Countess Bettina Bernadotte, President of the Council for the Lindau Nobel Laureate Meetings, Olov Amelin, Director of the Nobel Museum, and Lars Heikensten, Executive Director of the Nobel Foundation, the new travelling exhibition will be opened to the public. The ceremony will also feature a performance by the renowned artist Johan Hagelbäck.

“I got the idea for this project while taking a bike ride”, says photographer Volker Steger. “Why not ask Laureates to draw a sketch of the discovery that won them the Nobel Prize? And then ask them to display their artwork in front of the camera?” Each of his meetings with the Laureates began with Steger laying a blank sheet of paper and a box of crayons in front of them, after which he challenged them to: “Please draw your discovery!” Once completed, a portrait was taken of the Laureate holding the drawing. “All of the Laureates I have photographed were very surprised by my unusual request, because I had not told them about it beforehand. The idea was to capture something spontaneous. The sketches actually proved to be as multifaceted as the Laureates who created them. Nonetheless, they all display the beauty of intellectual concepts and of the mind at work”, Volker Steger explains.

The Laureates photographed for the project come from all three disciplines of physics, chemistry, and medicine or physiology. The majority of them have been awarded their prizes in recent decades, although some Laureates from the 1960s and 1970s are also featured. At the exhibition, the photo portraits and a selection of the original drawings are complemented by interviews, video footage, and digital presentations related to the Nobel Laureates and their discoveries. At the exhibition, the visitors can also get a first look at Volker Steger’s newest project “Nobel Labs 360°” and the new mediatheque of the Lindau Nobel Laureates Meetings.

Countess Bettina Bernadotte, President of the Council for the Lindau Nobel Laureate Meetings, expresses her gratitude that the Nobel Laureates engage in such a project. “It is an expression of their extraordinary dedication and curiosity. Considering their numerous obligations, we all really appreciate their dedication to the Mission Education and their willingness to become

engaged – be it in their interactions with outstanding young scientists in Lindau or in the context of the ‘Sketches of Science’ project.”

“For the first time the Nobel Museum is collaborating with the Lindau Nobel Laureate Meetings,” says Olov Amelin, Museum Director at the Nobel Museum. “We have a common goal – to stimulate research, curiosity and education. With this exhibition, we will reach young students and researchers on all continents and hopefully they will be inspired by the playfulness of the Nobel Laureates!”

Most of the portraits were taken at the annual Lindau Nobel Laureate Meetings. Each year, Nobel Laureates devote their time to congregate in Lindau on Lake Constance in Germany to meet young scientists from all over the world for a week of scientific exchange and inspiration.

The exhibition is a joint project of the Nobel Museum and the Lindau Nobel Laureate Meetings, with support of Nobel Media and principal funding by the Klaus Tschira Stiftung. From 8 June to 9 September 2012, the Nobel Museum will display the exhibition. The tour will then continue to Germany in 2013, North America and Asia in 2014 and 2015.

More information and pictures:

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