

## KAIROS-Preis 2010

### Ansprache von Birte Toepfer

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*(es gilt das gesprochene Wort)*

Zunächst großen Dank wiederum an die Mitglieder des Kuratoriums, die sich nicht für zu klug fanden, und alle sind besonders kluge Menschen, um nicht doch den Rat einer Stipendiatin ernst zu nehmen und nachzuforschen über Andri Magnason und Island. Diese kleine Insel, scheinbar am Rande der Welt, soviel im Dunkel, nur unter dem Nordlicht, wird auf einmal hart in die globale Welt geworfen und wir sehen sie wie in einem Prisma gebündelt oder einer extremen Nahaufnahme in hellem Licht mit allen Problemen dieser Welt, die sich in einer ewig währenden Wachstumsideologie eingeschaukelt hatte.

Dear Andri Magnason,

There have been said wonderful wise words before mine, giving a well rounded picture of you, your efforts and your country Island. What else could I bring to you, to honour your people and yourself, besides the Prize which of course is the reason for this occasion. The easiest way to show my respect for the people of Island, where language, words, poetry seem to be the tabernacle of the culture, would have been to come barefoot to the stage according to the icelandic proverb "it is better to be barefoot than to be without a book". But besides you, perhaps no one here today would have liked it, neither me, since it is still too cold!

Instead I bring two creations of words, first a poem in respect of the poet and the culture of Island, where poems can be shopped at the supermarket and eaten up in between milk and bread as daily nutrition and might help to survive economically difficult periods. I am sure you and many more here as well know the poem. If here is spoken of an Individual, from now on for me this will be the icelandic human being and his hunger for words:

#### **The book**

of Emily Dickinson:

He ate and drank the precious words,  
His spirit grew robust;  
he knew no more that he were poor,  
Nor that his frame was dust.  
He danced along the dingy days,  
And this bequest of wings  
Was but a book. What liberty  
A loosened spirit brings!

But your loosened spirit also needs roots to be able to flower (and of course still bread and milk, which the check might also help for in between bigger projects!) and therefore this Appalachian wisdom seems to be the secret of your work:

Creation often  
Needs two hearts  
One to root  
And one to flower  
(*Marilou Awiatka, Abiding Apalachia*)

You are, dear Andri Magnason, surely a man of two hearts!  
You are deeply rooted in your homeland Island, you care for its nature, traditions and songs. You engage yourself trying not to let this small Island be eaten up by global hunger for energy, and you flower in your poetry and books. So would you please, very carefully with your two hearts, come up to Mr. Wimmer and me and be rooted with both hearts also in the foundation.

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