



Acceptance speech

Jutta Bauer (Germany)

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen,

Buenas noches señores y señoras!

Thanks to International Board on books for young people for giving the award to me. Thanks to the Queen of Denmark and Thanks to all the people who organized everything here so well.

Somebody said to me last week: “Oh, you get the Andersen Award. Then you are the world’s best illustrator of this time!” I felt quite strange and could not agree.

I think, whatever you do or are, is not just yourself. You are always a part of a whole.

So I’ll try to show something of that whole, that made me standing here.

First of all – as a part of the whole, I should talk about my family, of course. For the family is the first and biggest influence of all.

I’m part of a big family. The youngest of a long row of (mostly) sisters.

And not a rich family... that may be a line to Andersen.

When I was at primary school, the teachers went to my parents and said: Jutta has such a gift for drawing, she should take some extra art classes after school! But my father said: Well, she can always have paper and pencils, that is enough.

I think, it was enough.

In our basement, there was a huge pile of leaflets – something about safety in traffic for pupils (for my father was an elementary teacher). They had a white backside. I used them a lot.

Maybe I should feel a little ashamed, that so many pupils did not get their safety instructions.

But more important it seems to me, that I had parents who sang songs by my bedside, and brothers and sisters who tried to steal the potatoes from my plate. So thanks to them!

Many of my loved ones are hidden in my books, like my father and Grandma (the angel) in *Grandpas Angel* (El ángel del abuelo) and of course you will find in my

books, disguised as a penguin, a bear or a child, the one I love most: My son Jasper. So, thanks to him for joining me here tonight.

But, when I was young I had other good companions, and they were book characters. They stay in the back of your head the whole life and they will never leave you. My favourites were: Petzi Bear (Rasmus Klump, from Denmark!), Brumm and Brown by the German writer Ida Bohatta and, best of all, Mumin. Until today, I admire Tove Jansson from Finland! Really good characters in children's stories do a really good job: they help us to carry our cares, problems and emotions. So thanks to all of them.

I studied Illustration at the Hamburg School of Applied Art. I think these schools, in Hamburg or Leipzig for example, are one of the reasons why we have such an well-developed book illustration culture in Germany.

My professor was Siegfried Oelke. He was often annoyed that I spent more time with political things, such as dispensing leaflets and student strikes, rather than practising my drawing. But once he said: You can do what you want, You will become an illustrator. This optimism felt good, it was holding me. So thanks to him.

When I began to to work as an illustrator after graduating, I found another "professional father": Jochen Gelberg, from edition Beltz & Gelberg. We just celebrated his 80th birthday. He was the one who published and promoted Janosch, F.K.Waechter, Rotraut Susanne Berner... and me.

So thanks to him.

Jochen put me in touch with many good authors: Klaus Kordon, Christine Nöstlinger, Peter Härtling, Benno Pludra, to name just a few. I was very lucky to sail with them as a beginner.

So thanks to them.

Beltz&Gelberg and their authors were the epitome of the 1970s atmosphere of emancipation and fight for freedom in Western Germany. That was a good motor for a young illustrator like me. We believed we could change the world, if we just worked hard enough. I think that might be different today!?

Except of people, editors and authors, there may be some other parts of the "whole" that made me to what I am: Places, atmospheres, the feeling of a period...

First of all, the chance to live and work in peace and without fear. We've had it for a long time, I hope it will never change

Thanks for that...

My native city, Hamburg, with its openminded atmosphere, lots of green and water, is important to me, too.

In 1983, myself and 18 other artists established the “Goldbekhof” – a place to work in a converted factory in the middle of Hamburg, by an old canal. It’s an important part of the whole – my really loved professional home, with sunlight from morning to evening, and good company of my colleagues there especially my assistant Annette. So thanks to everybody there, too!

Now after talking about all these people and places, maybe some of you might be interested in my work, my pictures. I just can show a little bit.

One of the books that mean most to me is *The Queen of Colours*. It’s also a very personal book. It has been published in many countries.

But most of you might not be aware that it was originally a short animated movie which I made together with the animation film maker Katrin Magnitz. We spent weeks cutting out the images with nail scissors and arranging them in front of her huge old camera.

I’m very happy that the *Queen of Colours* (and *Grandpas Angel* too) has also been turned into a play by many theatre companies and school projects. I thank them all for their good work!

Schreimutter, Madrechillona was originally just a short bedtime story for my son, and I am still a bit surprised at the success of this book!

This is *Opas Engel*, or *Grandpa’s Angel*, the book into which I worked my father’s and grandmother’s life stories. Among other things, the book talks of war, hunger and Nazism. I think that if you are sensitive enough, and find the right form, you can touch upon these dark topics in children’s books, too.

Homelessness, too, can be a subject for a children’s book, if you have a sensitive author as Kirsten Boie writing the text.

The story of Selma, the sheep, was created in just one long night. It was the first of my books that made it all the way to China, which is quite a long journey for a sheep.

Thank you, Selma, you did a great job!

There are some books, which I illustrated because I respect and admire their authors.

First of all, I would like to name Jürg Schubiger (fellow Andersen Prize winner), Franz Hohler and Peter Stamm. I think it's probably not a small risk for an author to put his story into the hands of an illustrator. It's a bit like handing a child into somebody other's care, and you can't be sure what's going to happen to him! So thanks to them for trusting me.

