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The Holberg Prize Names British Storyteller and Fairytale Critic Marina Warner as 2015 Laureate

(BERGEN, Norway)– Today, [The Holberg Prize](#), the largest annual international prize awarded to outstanding researchers in the arts and humanities, social science, law or theology, named British author, scholar and critic [Marina Warner](#) as its 2015 laureate. Warner will receive the financial award of £ 380,000 during a formal ceremony at the University of Bergen (UiB) on June 10.

Warner is receiving the honour for her work on the analysis of stories and myths and how they reflect their time and place. She is known for the emphasis of gender roles and feminism in her literary work.

“I have tried to explore long-lasting but often disregarded forms of expression such as popular stories and vernacular imagery in order to understand the interactions of culture and ethics,” said Warner. “The prize gives me and my fellow researchers wonderful, surprising encouragement in this endeavor, which lies at the heart of arts and humanities scholarship.”

To date, Warner has published more than a dozen books including her most recent work *Once Upon a Time: A Short History of Fairy Tale*. This text explores the meaning of fairytales and highlights questions of gender, feminism, and psychoanalysis in the fairy tale tradition. Warner is currently working on a novel inspired by her father’s bookshop in Egypt in the 1950s entitled *Inventory of a Life Mislaid*.

“As a story-teller and novelist in her own right, Marina Warner recognizes and celebrates the alternative forms of knowledge to be found in narrative,” said Chair of the Holberg Academic Committee Mary Jacobus. “In work that is at once dazzling and accessible, she ranges across the fields of comparative literature, mythography and folklore, popular culture and translation, the encounter of east and west, the study of art, symbols, and objects, the history of science, and the role of women.”

Warner’s career began as a staff writer for Britain’s *Daily Telegraph* before working as *Vogue*’s features editor, at age 22, from 1969 until 1972. Afterwards, she began a more than 30-year-career as an independent writer and scholar. Since then, she has won numerous international literary accolades including the Sheikh Zayed Book Award, the Truman Capote Award for Literary Criticism, and the National Book Critics Circle Award for Criticism.

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Warner holds more than 10 honorary doctoral degrees from institutions throughout the U.K., including Oxford University, King's College London, and the University of Exeter among others. Her academic career has included teaching and research positions at Oxford, Cambridge, Stanford, Princeton, and NYU Abu Dhabi, where she is currently a visiting professor. She is currently a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford, and a Professor of English and Creative Writing at Birkbeck College, University of London.

“Throughout her courageous career Marina has brought complex images and ideas into the public realm and pressed them for insight into our contemporary condition,” said Mariët Westermann, Vice President of the [Andrew W. Mellon Foundation](#). “By recognizing her commitment to the social life of expressive forms, the Holberg Prize has trained our attention on the incomparable value of the humanities to diverse and democratic societies.”

Warner is exploring the possibility of spending the prize money on cultural preservation amongst refugees and migrants. Warner, who was born in London, will be the second British Holberg Prize Laureate. British Historian [Michael Cook](#), a leading expert at Princeton on the history and religious thought of Islam, received the honour in 2014. For a complete list of previous Holberg Prize winners, visit www.holbergprisen.no/en.

This year, the Holberg Prize received 70 nominations from universities from across the globe.

About the Holberg Prize

Established by the Norwegian Parliament in 2003, the Holberg Prize (@holbergprisen) is the largest annual international research prize awarded to scholars who have made outstanding contributions to research in the arts and humanities, social science, law or theology. The Prize is funded by the government through a direct allocation from the Ministry of Education and Research to the University of Bergen (UiB). Previous winners include Jürgen Habermas, Julia Kristeva, Manuel Castells, and Bruno Latour. To learn more about the Holberg Prize or possibilities for 2016 nominations visit: www.holbergprisen.no/en

The Holberg Prize is named after writer, essayist, philosopher, historian and playwright Ludvig Holberg. Holberg was born in Bergen in 1684 and played an important part in bringing the Enlightenment to the Nordic countries.

Visit www.holbergprisen.no/en for press photos, biography, the official statement from the Committee and various background information

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