

Main speech for Lene Maria Christensen, winner of the Lauritzen Prize 2011.

Speaker: Lars C. W. Wallenberg:

Being typecast in a certain kind of role is probably the worst, most stultifying thing that can happen to an actor. Because once in a box, it takes a lot to break out of the genre's treadmill. If you are cast as an ice queen, it all too often ends with you being associated merely with that kind of role and if cast as a naive type, it can also end the same way.

Despite her breakthrough as Constanze in Peter Shaffer's *Amadeus* ten years ago, Lene Maria Christensen was quickly cast in light, often slightly naive, roles which is just one aspect of what today's winner can do; that is playing on the brittle sensitivity that is both shocking but also reflects what we all know: the ordinary human vulnerability lying that lies behind a mask of assumed self-confidence.

Another winner of the Lauritzen Prize was also typecast for many years as a sweet naive girl even though most people will have certainly forgotten or repressed it. We are talking about Ghita Nørby, who for more than ten years had to put up with playing a sweet young girl in the style of the Baronessen fra benzintanken (*Baroness from the Gas Station*) right up to the moment when a director, Erling Schroeder, gave her the chance to play so-called serious roles, and we all know how things have gone for Ghita since then. Now we shall see whether Lene Maria Christensen can manage to follow in these illustrious footsteps. But the talent is there, there is no doubt about that. One of the things that the Lauritzen Prize Committee emphasizes is that this prize is not just awarded to an actor or actress for so-called long and faithful service. The Lauritzen Prize is awarded in recognition of being able to be visionary in thinking and practicing the art, of showing real talent that also points to the future which is where Lene Maria Christensen is once again a good example. Because if anything, she has a wry but also absolutely correct and understated way with her. An approach that in some way or other is new on Danish screen and stage and is also one that feels international in its own, almost shy way.

Dear Lene Maria Christensen. There is absolutely no reason for you to feel shy. What you do and what you stand for is so golden, so why not give gold for gold? So congratulations on the Lauritzen Prize 2011 and the DKK 250,000 that follow in its wake. We are all looking forward to seeing where you will take Danish acting, also in the years ahead. Congratulations.