

About the Söderberg family, the foundations and the prize

The Torsten and Wanja Söderberg's prize was inaugurated in 1992 by the Torsten and Ragnar Söderberg Foundations, two of Sweden's most important donors to Sweden's research and development. The foundations were formed in 1960. During the year 2007, the foundations allocated SEK 290,9 million to scientific and corresponding purposes.

The brothers Torsten (1894-1960) and Ragnar Söderberg (1900-1974) were mainly active in the family company, Söderberg & Haak, the largest iron & steel wholesaler in Sweden, founded in 1866 with head office in Stockholm. Ragnar Söderberg was the chairman and managing director of the company while Torsten Söderberg was the general manager of the company's activities in Göteborg. In addition, the brothers founded Ratos AB. Torstens's wife Wanja, née Aminoff (1899-1982) is also a donor to Torsten Söderberg's foundation.

As the name implies, the Torsten and Wanja Söderberg's Prize was inaugurated to commemorate the Göteborg branch of the Söderberg family tree. Torsten and Wanja Söderberg were members of the Association of Friends of the Röhsska Museum from 1938. Torsten became a committee member in 1948 and was its chairman between 1950 and 1960, as his son Tomas is to this day. In addition, Torsten Söderberg was a member of the Röhsska Museum board, appointed by the Göteborg Museum foundation.

There are thus close links between the Söderberg family and the Röhsska Museum, which have been further strengthened by a special design and decorative art prize inaugurated to commemorate the centenary of Torsten Söderberg's birth. The Torsten and Wanja Söderberg Prize currently amounts to SEK 1.000,000. It is administered by the Röhsska Museum, to be annually awarded to an active Nordic designer or craftsman. In addition to the considerable prize sum, the prizewinner will be given the opportunity of exhibiting his/her work in a separate exhibition at the Röhsska Museum in conjunction with the prize giving ceremony. Every six years, the prize can be divided into five equal parts and used to reward especially important work by critics in the field, one from each Nordic country. When the prize is awarded to people within the field of industrial design, it can be shared equally by several people who have worked together on the same project. The Torsten and Wanja Söderberg Prize has been awarded to the following persons since 1994:

Previous prizewinners:

- 1994 Jane Reumert, Denmark
- 1995 Liv Blåvarp, Norway
- 1996 Brita Flander, Finland
- 1997 Mats Theselius, Sweden
- 1998 Louise Sass, Denmark
- 1999 (Nordic design writers) Aðalsteinn Ingólfsson, Iceland, Kaj Kalin, Finland, John Vedel-Rieper, Denmark, Jorunn Veiteberg, Norway and Kerstin Wickman, Sweden
- 2000 Peter Opsvik, Norway
- 2001 Björn Dahlström, Sweden
- 2002 HC Ericson, Sweden
- 2003 Sigurdur Gústafsson, Iceland
- 2004 Janna Syvänoja, Finland
- 2005 Anna Rosén, Cynthia Charwick, Maria Ugglå, Maria Widell Christiansen, Camilla Palmertz, Eva-Lisa Andersson, Elna Holmberg, Lena Ekelund and Tatiana Butovitsch Temm, Sweden
- 2006 Ole Jensen, Denmark
- 2007 Norway Says; Torbjørn Anderssen, Andreas Engesvik and Espen Voll, Norway
- 2008 Steinunn Sigurðardóttir, Iceland