



20 January, 2023

The Nils Klim Committee Citation: Simona Zetterberg-Nielsen

The Nils Klim Committee has decided to recommend that Simona Zetterberg-Nielsen be the recipient of the 2023 Nils Klim Prize.

Simona Zetterberg-Nielsen is Associate Professor of Scandinavian Studies at the Faculty of Arts, at Aarhus University, Denmark. She pursued her university education at Aarhus University, completing her PhD degree in 2017 with the dissertation 'Fictionality and the Formation of the Novel – with a Focus on the Invention of Eighteenth-Century Danish Fiction'. While Aarhus University has been her academic base, she has been a visiting student and later visiting scholar at academic institutions in Europe, Australia, and the USA. Zetterberg-Nielsen has also been an active participant in international scholarly collaboration, especially in the areas of narratology, the history of the novel, and fictionality.

Throughout her academic career, Zetterberg-Nielsen has been prolific on several academic fronts: teaching and supervising, editing journals and books, and organizing conferences, as well as giving lectures and publishing in both English and Danish, a bilingual activity which is exemplary in itself. Zetterberg-Nielsen's achievements have been acknowledged with Aarhus University's award for best PhD dissertation in the Humanities, with a number of substantial postdoctoral grants, and most recently with an Inge Lehmann grant to establish a research group entitled 'The Science of Fiction – How Fiction Shaped Science and Science Shaped Fiction'.

Much of Zetterberg-Nielsen's scholarly work has centred around the concept of 'fictionality' and its various implications and manifestations. Unlike the term 'literariness', which has been important in demarcating the specificity of literature and its expressiveness, 'fictionality' has in recent scholarship come to designate the relation of literature to lived reality, the world of individual and social experiences. This entails that fictionality exists in dialectical relation to factuality.

Zetterberg-Nielsen has fruitfully explored the ways in which the concept has been applied by her predecessors and she has wielded it masterfully in her own studies of both individual texts and larger corpuses, most notably the 18th century Danish novel in its entirety. She has also approached the concept theoretically, analysing its rhetorical, communicative aspects, and its pragmatic, context-dependent relevance. 'Fictionality', as she points out, is not limited to literary discourse, for it plays a vital role in everyday conversation – and she is now turning her attention to the ways in which it pertains to science. The broad relevance of her impressive scholarship is highlighted by one of the key predicaments of our times: the unreliability of mankind's ever-broadening technical modes of communication.



For all the reasons stated, Simona Zetterberg-Nilsen is a most worthy recipient of the 2023 Nils Klim Prize.

On behalf of the Nils Klim Committee,

Ástráður Eysteinnsson, Chair