

## **Press release**

December 14, 2009

### **Spinozalens 2010 to Richard Sennett**

The fifth edition of the Spinozalens has been awarded to the renowned American sociologist Richard Sennett. The Spinozalens is a biennial international award. The jury, an assembly of philosophers and other scientists from The Netherlands and Flanders, selects a famous thinker and writer on issues of ethics and society. The award aims to encourage the debate on ethics and morality. The Spinozalens entails a sculpture and 10.000 Euros. To commemorate the occasion, a special book will be published to introduce the laureate's work.

The festive ceremony will be held on Spinoza's date of birth, November 24 2010, in the Nieuwe Kerk in The Hague.

The jury praises Sennett's work. He has the ability to translate contemporary themes like individualisation, lack of orientation and lack of power of modern man into accessible, guiding books. He is focused on superficiality and instability of relationships, and on the effects of power. His early work demonstrates strong roots in his native city Chicago, and his childhood in the infamous "projects. His books bridge the gap between scholarly thinking and actual applicability, and most have become bestsellers. In his recent interviews on the financial crisis, Sennett exposes the limitations of meritocracy and market orientation. He strongly advocates that market orientation should be removed from public sectors, in particular from education and health care.

The Spinozalens was awarded for the first time in 1999, under auspices of the International Spinoza Award Foundation, established in Amsterdam.

Previous laureates are Edward Said, Avishai Margalit, Tzvetan Todorov, Donna Dickenson en Michael Walzer.

Extensive information on the award, the jury and the laureates is to be found at the website:

[www.spinozalens.nl](http://www.spinozalens.nl)

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