

Press release

18 March 2004

Norman Foster honoured for his achievements in bridging Europe and the US

Lord Foster was honoured with the Transatlantic Bridge Award at a gala hosted by the Friends of Freie Universitaet Berlin in New York on 26 February 2004. Fosters innovative work and his contributions to the cities of New York and Berlin were celebrated by over 330 friends and supporters, including representatives from business, government, the United Nations diplomatic core, architectural community and academia. As the first distinguished recipient of this Award, Lord Foster inaugurates this legacy for Friends of Freie Universitaet Berlin.

The Transatlantic Bridge Award is presented to individuals who embrace global challenges and through their vision, character and leadership, make significant contributions on both sides of the Atlantic. Chancellor Gerhard Schröder wrote, by conferring on Lord Foster the Transatlantic Bridge Award, FFUB paid tribute to a man whose lifes work has had a truly international impact. In their citation, the FFUB described Fosters work on the new Reichstag Parliament in Berlin, and in New York on the World Trade Center site, as examples of his visionary leadership, which understands the past while looking toward the future. Senator Edward M. Kennedy expressed his personal gratitude that Fosters exceptional talent is part of the rebuilding of Lower Manhattan, and Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton thanked him for his hard work and vision and his dedication to the ideal that the site will demonstrate to the world New Yorks strength, resiliency and resolve.

In his acceptance speech Foster discussed the importance of building on the past rather than eradicating it, however difficult this task might be. He acknowledged the German governments willingness to consider the Reichstag Dome as a structure that refers to the past while addressing the need to build for the future. Ambassador Wolfgang Ischinger paid tribute to Lord Fosters efforts by describing the distinctive glass dome as a symbol of democratic transparency and openness. It is an outstanding work which Berliners and Germans enthusiastically embrace.

Speaking of the many tributes to his work, Lord Foster noted, It is a profound complement to have my work recognised by the FFUB, an organization dedicated to the Universitys of Truth, Justice and Liberty. I was honored to have my work perceived as optimistic and humane, ideals I have always aspired to create in architecture.

The gala also served to launch FFUBs \$2.5 million capital campaign for the Henry Ford Building on the FU Berlin campus. Proceeds from the event will sponsor FFUBs support of the Universitys dedication to academic excellence and to reaffirm the transatlantic relationship between America and Germany.

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