



Speech by writer Jostein Gaarder

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Oct. 16th 2007, Norwegian writer Jostein Gaarder, author of the international bestseller "Sophie's World" visited Fudan University and delivered an impassionate speech. Mr. Jostein Gaarder's speech attracted over 400 students. Many of the students have read several books written by Gaarder.

Mr. and Mrs. Gaarder had a meeting with Prof. Chen Yinzhong, Director of the Foreign Affair Office, Prof. Huang Yongmin, President of College of Foreign Language and Literature, Prof Sun Jian, Chair of Department of English Language, College of Foreign Language and President of Centre for Nordic Literature Research, and Ms. Tone Helene Aarvik, Programme Manager of Nordic Centre. Norwegian Consul General Fred Harald Nomme and his wife participated in the meeting.

After the meeting, Mr. Jostein Gaarder gave a speech entitled "Philosophy and Literature" in front of an audience of more than 400 students. Mr. Jostein Gaarder gave a brief introduction of himself. He recounted his own experience as an 11-year-old boy who was suddenly amazed by the existence of his own being, and asked around for an answer. From then on he felt involved in an eternal mystery about human being, which he still feels he is a part today.

Talking about his world renowned work, "Sophie's World", the author said that he would have included the Eastern ideas like Confucianism, Taoism and Indian philosophy if he had known that the book would end up with so many readers, adding that he initially thought "Sophie's World" would only attract a group of specialists, and not the broad audience.

Mr. Jostein Gaarder also introduced his new book to the Chinese readers, “Maya”, which is another adventure into the big ideas and meaning of life and love.

After his speech, Mr. Jostein Gaarder was generous to give all the present students his signature.