



Photo: Hannes Maar

Award-winning author **JÖRN JACOB ROHWER** is well-known for elegantly merging elements of literature and journalism in his writings. Widely published since 1995, his lengthy profile conversations with luminaries from the arts, science and society are best represented by his book of nearly 900 pages, »Die Seismografie des Fragens« (Salis, Zurich, 2014—currently in English translation.)

Rohwer graduated with distinction from UCL, London University. He received numerous international fellowships and foundation grants, lectured and read in Germany, Switzerland and the USA. His subsequent, seventh book is intended to comprise a collection of biographical essays. Besides writing, Rohwer works in arts communications and lives in Berlin.

Walt Disney's vision for an art school located before the gates of Los Angeles became a reality: The California Institute of the Arts. Opened 50 years ago, it had long been in crisis, before Steven D. Lavine led it to international acclaim and financial prosperity. During the nearly three decades of his presidency (1988–2017), CalArts became a uniquely influential institution across the arts, with a commitment to continuing experimentation, interdisciplinary collaboration, social justice and civic engagement, domestic and international diversity. Today, CalArts is the cradle of many Academy Award and Pulitzer Prize winners, of Mellon and Guggenheim Fellows—a hotspot of American creativity.

In **STEVEN D. LAVINE: FAILURE IS WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT**, German author Jörn Jacob Rohwer explores the story of CalArts and the historical and biographical origins of Lavine's approach to life, with special attention to the way in which personal doubts and weaknesses became the basis of a style of leadership based on listening, learning, and consensus building. Rohwer uncovers the deep grounding of Lavine's commitment to diversity and equal opportunity in his family's immigrant past and its legacy of Eastern European Jewry. Moreover conversing with him about US-culture, the avantgarde, philanthropy and Los Angeles at the centre of his being, Lavine proves to be a sensitive thinker, visionary and transatlantic mediator between the European and American worlds of art, politics and education. Consequently, in 2017 he was appointed as Founding Director (and later American Advisory Board Chair) of the Thomas Mann House in Los Angeles, with a mandate to encourage US-German exchange and inquiry around urgent contemporary issues, especially the future of democracy.



Jörn Jacob Rohwer

**STEVEN D. LAVINE — FAILURE IS WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT**

Jörn Jacob Rohwer

# STEVEN D. LAVINE — FAILURE IS WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT

**A Life Devoted  
to Leadership  
in the Arts**

DEUTSCHER KUNSTVERLAG

Cover photo: Trying to hit the ball despite seeing double: young Steven in 1956