

2007 VOL 45, NO. 1

Bookbird

A JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S LITERATURE



Vine leaves, rubies and Eugene Trivizas

IBBY in Macau

Little Black Sambo in Japan

A cherished dream in Russia

Children's literature in Mexico

Seven Stories in the UK

INTERNATIONAL BOARD ON BOOKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

IBBY

The Journal of IBBY, the International Board on Books for Young People

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Bookbird's editorial office is supported by the Church of Ireland College of Education, Dublin, Ireland.

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Cover image: Upside-down room at Seven Stories, Newcastle, UK. Designed by Ted Dewan.

Production: Design and layout by Oldtown Design, Dublin (kierannolan@oldtown.ie)
Copyedited and proofread by Antoinette Walker
Printed in Canada by Transcontinental

Bookbird: A Journal of International Children's Literature (ISSN 0006-7377) is a refereed journal published quarterly by IBBY, the International Board on Books for Young People, Nonnenweg 12 Postfach, CH-4003 Basel, Switzerland tel. +4161 272 29 17 fax: +4161 272 27 57 email: ibby@ibby.org <www.ibby.org>.

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Subscriptions to Bookbird: See inside back cover

Bookbird is indexed in Library Literature, Library and Information Abstracts (LISA), Children's Book Review Index, and the MLA International Bibliography.

CANADA POSTMASTER: Bookbird. Publications Mail Registration Number 40600510. Send address changes to University of Toronto Press Inc., 5201 Dufferin Street, Toronto, ON M3H 5T8.

*I said it in Hebrew – I said it in Dutch –
I said it in German and Greek:
But I wholly forgot (and it vexes me much)
That English is what you speak!*

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Editorial

No, reader, the cover of this issue of *Bookbird* isn't a mistake. It is indeed a picture of an upside-down room designed by illustrator Ted Dewan for Seven Stories, the wonderful centre for children's books, at Newcastle in the UK, about which you can read in Elizabeth Hamill's article in this issue.

This topsy-turvy room seems to us to say much about children's literature. It represents a decided disruption of the cosy domestic scene that is often a feature of children's books, before some sort of disturbance occurs that puts the everyday out of focus, turns it upside down. Often parents or guardians, custodians of a predictable world, are banished before adventures begin; or everyday objects assume strange properties like the clock in Philippa Pearce's *Tom's Midnight Garden*. Ever since Alice disappeared down the rabbit hole on that bright summer's day, we have come to accept, as typical of children's books, the disjunction between the 'normal' world and a world in which the extraordinary provides, at the least, a backdrop for adventures, mystery, magic. And this is not the only kind of transformation that takes place in children's books; there are also those transformations that occur in the mind of an author/illustrator and are transmitted to readers in a complicit act that takes place within the covers of a book.

This act is celebrated here in Vadim Vasiliev's article about a most unusual children's book award, the Russian 'Cherished Dream'. In an article about the work of the Greek author, Eugene Trivizas – recently shortlisted for the Hans Christian Andersen award – Angela Yannicopolou shows us the many topsy-turvy ways in which a story can be constructed and subverted in texts which allow for multiple readings. In an article on a recent reissue in Japan of the classic tale of Little Black Sambo, we see how things may not always be as they seem in children's books. Here we see how visual interpretations of a text may change and respond to circumstances, heightening or lessening the incongruities in the original text. Evelyn

Bookbird editors



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SIOBHÁN PARKINSON is a writer of fiction for children and adults (young and otherwise) and a professional editor.

Arizpe introduces us to the sometimes realistic and sometimes fantastic world of writing for children in Mexico. This fascinating exploration will be continued in the April 2007 issue.

Joan Glazer, in her thoughtful and amusing evocation of the recent IBBY congress in Macau, captures the intensity, the vibrancy and the inspirational energy generated by delegates from many diverse parts of the world, who came together to share their common intent to bring books to children wherever they may be. And those who attended the congress will make the connection between the opening remarks in this editorial about the disruption of reality and the fantasy world of Fisherman's Wharf in Macau where the congress was held.

Happy topsy-turvy reading(s)!



Finding a Voice

The Development of Mexican Children's Literature, Part I

• *Children's literature in Mexico has undergone something of a revolution in the past two decades. In the first of a two-part series, Evelyn Arizpe outlines the transformed relationship between the adult writer and the child reader*

In the last 25 years the market for children's books in Mexico has become one of the largest and fastest growing areas of the book trade in that country. With more than one-third of its population of 100 million under the age of 15, this would seem hardly surprising. What is surprising, however, is that as recently as 1980 there were hardly any books for children except for textbooks. Two pioneering studies of Mexican children's literature in the 1970s concluded that it practically did not exist at a commercial level (Charpenel 1972; Schon 1977).

This situation began changing in the 1980s due in large part to the first international children's book fair (FILIJ), organised in Mexico City in 1981 by the then recently formed national section

by EVELYN ARIZPE



Evelyn Arizpe is a lecturer in children's literature at the Faculty of Education, University of Glasgow

Books for children were not published because children did not read and children did not read because there were no books for them to read :

of the International Board on Books for Young People. One of the founders of IBBY-Mexico was Carmen García Moreno, who found that from 1900 to 1979 only 70 books by Mexican authors had been published (García Moreno 1989). She realised that publishers and children were caught in a vicious circle, whereby books for children were not published because children did not read and children did not read because there were no books for them to read.

The yearly fair began raising the profile of children's literature through exhibitions by national and international publishers, public lectures and workshops, as well as providing a space for editors, translators and illustrators to meet. Although in 1989, the number of books for children produced per year still did not cover even 1 per cent of the young population, books published by Mexican authors rose to 121 by 1984 and then to 355 in 1988 (Malvido 1989). By 1986, publishing houses dedicated exclusively to children's books rose from two to eight while another eleven added this genre to their catalogues (Joysmith 1986). Many of these publishing houses, as well as various government institutions and IBBY-Mexico, created literary awards and offered opportunities for writing, studying and promoting children's literature.

The early 20th century

The international fair also drew attention to modern forms of children's literature and illustration from other countries. As some of these texts began to be translated into Spanish, they contributed to a general move away from the didactic, moralistic and patriotic tones which had dominated literature for children in Mexico for most of the 20th century. At the end of the 19th century, a few books for children had begun to appear alongside the religious texts, traditional European fables and prehispanic folklore with which children were usually taught to read. The Revolution of 1910 put a stop to most publications until the 1920s when the Ministry of Education took up the task of providing books for children, although at the time they mainly published world-renowned 'classics' illustrated by contemporary artists. The nationalist

Until the 1970s, authors of children's books tended to be educationalists by profession :

movement of the 1930s and 40s influenced much of the literature of the following decades, where the culture and landscape of the 'Motherland' was idealised and moral values were highlighted. Oral tales were collected and published as part of this tradition, suitably reinterpreted for young readers.

Until the 1970s, authors of children's books tended to be educationalists by profession. With few exceptions, their stories usually served as vehicles for transmitting ethical and moral values such as patience, duty, humility and love of one's country. Antonio Robles, a prolific and popular author since the 1930s, wrote in 1969 that 'one shouldn't look for what children like, but make sure that children like what they should' (Robles 1969, p. 33). In 1954, another author, Blanca Lydia Trejo, declared that the 'unavoidable mission' of children's literature was to contribute to the 'moral and intellectual formation of the child' (Trejo 1954, p. 6).

• ***Their stories usually served as vehicles for transmitting ethical and moral values such as patience, duty, humility and love of one's country***

During this period, at their best, authors of children's texts created poetic retellings of fables and other traditional tales; at their worst, they preached and produced sentimental images of childhood with a noticeable lack of humour and any sign of the social and cultural changes in real children's lives in Mexico at that time, such as rural poverty and urban migration. (For more on early children's literature in Mexico, see Rey 2000 and Arizpe 2004.)

Changes after 1980

In the mid-1980s I carried out a study of contemporary stories for children written by authors who were either Mexicans by nationality or who lived and published in Mexico (Arizpe 1994). The project was limited to books published after 1980 for readers between the ages of about 6 and 10. As it turned out, the

main difficulty was obtaining books, given that most of them could only be found in dusty corners of a few bookshops. The project involved twenty randomly selected stories subjected to literary and linguistic analysis. Although this approach had its limitations, it did reveal certain general trends, such as the following:

- Although most stories continued to present a dualistic view of 'good' and 'bad', where characters' struggles between vice and virtue (that is, selfishness/unselfishness or laziness/effort) were highlighted and the outcome was predictable, a few were presenting more subtle themes and playing with the imaginary and the magical, introducing suspense and surprise.
- Stereotypical characters were common, although gender stereotypes were not particularly in evidence. Many of these characters were wooden and unconvincing. However, some more memorable characters, who invited the empathy of young readers, were also beginning to emerge.
- In most texts an omniscient point of view predominated and narrator interventions were frequent. It was as if the authors adopted the role of all-powerful guides, took readers by the hand to introduce them to characters and situations, and in this way also attempted to direct their responses.
- There was a general absence of humour, irony and nonsense; in some cases the humorous aspects felt forced, as if they were a concession to the intended child reader. This resulted in texts being either sentimental or banal.

As a whole, the analysis made apparent those texts that were merely a writing exercise to put a particular message across and those that reflected the author's intention of sharing a significant emotion through playful language and a sense of humour that would appeal to children. One of the best collections of stories,



for example, was *Grillito Socoyote en el circo de pulgas y otros cuentos de animales* [Socoyote Cricket in the flea circus and other animal stories] by Gilberto Rendón Ortiz, an author who has since received several awards for his books for children. Building on the best of a tradition of oral tales and fables, Rendón Ortiz sets the action in the local environment, playing with the sounds of the native names of animals and plants and creating believable characters busily occupied in what often turn out to be humorous situations. In one story, the Queen Cockroach tricks the other insects into buying ‘important’ names – the longer the better – to replace their old ones, so that the bumblebee becomes ‘Caziatchisliporictéo Alumcatintipas Sánchez Domínguez’. In another, a dusty little agave plant is looked down upon until it finally flowers, attracting dozens of tiny hummingbirds called ‘huichichiquis’:

It was like a small rosebud, but it was not a rosebud. It had ash green leaves, tough and straight and had arrived rolling little by little, pushed by the wind, until it managed to hold on with its tiny roots in the most arid ground of the valley. ‘What an ugly dwarf,’ exclaimed the green Silk Cuiji Lizard, when she pricked her side with one of the newcomer’s stiff points...

Finally, one day the little yellow flowers, laden with nectar and pollen began to open ... the green Silk Cuiji Lizard remained on a mossy stone upon which she liked to sunbathe on her back, secretly watching the bunches of flowers out of the corner of her eye. And the same day that the buds began to burst, the first huichichiqui appeared.¹

Rendón Ortiz does not patronise his young readers. Although there are ‘morals’ to be drawn from his stories, they are just one part of the whole literary experience which presents them with a simple yet poetic language and a playful approach to complex human emotions such as envy and pride.

Other outstanding authors in this selection, who like Rendón Ortiz were adopting a more playful tone in addressing child readers while still taking their task seriously, were Emilio Carballido, Magolo Cárdenas, Francisco Hinojosa, Tere Remolina, Aline Petterson, Elena Dreser and Liliana Santirso. Illustrators such as Carlos López Pellicer, Laura Fernández (both of them also authors), María Figueroa and Felipe Dávalos (winner of the first UNICEF Ezra Jack Keats International Award in 1984) were also exploring new avenues through their illustrations, often incorporating

***The Queen Cockroach tricks
the other insects into
buying ‘important’ names
– the longer the better –
so the bumblebee becomes
‘Caziatchisliporictéo
Alumcatintipas Sánchez
Domínguez’***

contemporary artistic trends. The study suggested these authors and illustrators were finding ways of appealing to children living in a more modern Mexico, through topics, styles and a language that signalled respect for their intelligence and experience.

Writers and readers: a new relationship

Ten years later, in 1995, I looked again at what was being published for Mexican children. By then, the general increase in publications for children and the interest in their promotion was evident. A glance at new collections, for example, particularly those published by the Ministry of Education, the National Council for Culture and publishing houses like the Centre for Information and Development of Communication and Children's Literature and the Fondo de Cultura Económica revealed high-quality books being produced and promoted through reading programmes, school fairs and teachers' workshops.

This time I tried to select one book from each of these new collections for children given that, unlike ten years before, it would have been too big a task to try and collect all recent publications. For this study I looked at the texts from the perspectives of reader-response theories which consider the active participation of the reader in the act of reading. I was also interested in the relationship between author or narrator and the reader and, in particular, the 'voice' of the text which, as Barbara Wall argues in *The Narrator's Voice*, marks the text as a children's book. She differentiates between narrators that are really addressing the adult reader and narrators that take children seriously and do not overtly interfere, resulting in texts that invite readers to share the jokes and the irony, 'at once if they already have the necessary knowledge, or later if they need time to grow into them' (Wall 1991, p. 153).

It seemed that new trends were emerging in

New trends were emerging in books for Mexican children, particularly in terms of the relationship between the adult writer and the child reader

books for Mexican children, particularly in terms of this relationship between the adult writer and the child reader. There was clearly a move away from the earlier didactic tones, but there was also a development in the way in which the child readers were addressed, based on a respect for their intelligence and for the contribution they could bring to the text. Considering whether children's literature in English has 'come of age', Victor Watson has recently suggested that during the 20th century 'children's authors were developing and refining the art of writing specifically for young readers [in English]. In the Renaissance it would have been called a rhetoric, the art of using language with an audience in mind' (Watson 2005, p. 5). In most of these new Mexican texts, the experience of the child is valued rather than underestimated. Watson makes the crucial point that:

[T]he best writers of fiction for young readers understand that they must find ways of making the complexity of human experience manageable for young readers who are inexperienced both as readers and as people ... but this manageability must be achieved without any diminishing of what it is to be a human being. And without sentimentalising or patronising. (Watson 2005, p. 4)

A comparison between two examples from the group of texts published between 1985 and 1995 helps illuminate this point. Both reflect the way in which writers were beginning to explore

new themes, such as first love, as well as new ways of addressing their readers. In the book *El secreto de Gorco* [Gorco's secret] by Ricardo Chávez Castañeda, a voice begins by telling the reader that all of us, including Mama, the postman and Grandma, have an important secret. This voice then introduces Gorco (perhaps 8 or 9 years old) and reveals his secret to the reader: he was in love with a girl of 14. The voice continues telling us what he thinks, his attempts to get rid of this feeling (for example by standing on his head) and finally his ingenuous decision to marry, live in a tree with his wife and survive on fruit. When Gorco next sees the girl again, he suddenly realises that he is not in love anymore; however, he does not understand that it is because he has now fallen in love with a younger sister whom he has just met. The narrator's voice tells us that 'the problem was that no one had explained to Gorco that one nail drives out another nail'. The overall impression is that, despite the attempts at humour, the narrator is exposing the child's naivety for the amusement of the adult. If there was an attempt to 'manage' the complex human experience of being in love for young readers, it has failed in that the voice both sentimentalises and patronises his character, who seems incapable of working out what has happened to him. Would the ending of this story make any sense to a boy of Gorco's age?

Juan Villoro treats the reader very differently in *El profesor Ziper y la fabulosa guitarra eléctrica* [Professor Ziper and the fabulous electric guitar].

Francisco Hinojosa has succeeded in exploiting the pleasure children take in the fantastic and the absurd and has found an authentic, empathetic voice to communicate with his readers :



In this short novel, the narrator uses the expressions and wordplay which involve his intended audience: children on the verge of adolescence. The main character, Pablo, is the younger brother of a famous rock guitarist who has become the victim of a mad scientist. Pablo goes through extraordinary adventures as he struggles to save his brother and his rock group. At one point he meets a girl and readers are invited to empathise with Pablo's strange new feelings:

What the devil! This girl was a disaster: she had a weird name, she was more snooty than a peacock and she hated his brother. And yet, despite everything, he could not stop staring at her rosy cheeks. Pablo's emotions were getting all confused Was this what adults call 'growing up'?

Within the world of heavy rock music and mad scientists with their outrageous inventions, these initial feelings of love do not seem out of place. The narrator weaves the theme of young love in and out of the plot, without either diminishing

Pablo's experience or being banal about it.

Another particularly exciting voice from within the group of selected texts was that of an author who has since managed to turn writing for children into a profession. Francisco Hinojosa has also succeeded in exploiting the pleasure children take in the fantastic and the absurd and who has found an authentic, empathetic voice to communicate with his readers. *La peor señora del mundo* [The worst lady in the world], for example, tells the story of an extravagantly wicked woman from a child's perspective. As in Roald Dahl's stories, the monstrous and the cruel become funny through exaggeration:

She slapped her sons, bit carpenters' ears, put out her cigar on taxi drivers' bellybuttons with her long nails, she scratched elephants' trunks, she twisted giraffes' necks and ate harmless tarantulas alive. Even lions behaved like kittens when they saw her because she pulled their manes so hard that she left them bald and with tears in their eyes. As for flowers, in a few hours there was not a single one that managed to keep its petals.

Everyone has had enough of the worst lady and one day while she sleeps, the whole town agrees on a clever plan. They all pretend to



• Since 1995, not only Hinojosa and Villoro but also many others have changed the tenor of children's literature, raising voices that challenge the past but still signal a search for a 'rhetoric'

enjoy her bullying, even asking her to do it again. By saying the opposite of what they really feel, the worst lady in the world ends up actually doing good to everyone!

Some of the findings of this second random selection of children's books were the following:

- Topics were more varied; they included contemporary issues that affect children and teenagers, such as first love, as well as social and environmental issues. Some dared to simply be 'fun' and actively challenged stereotypes.
- There were more ventures into the territory of literature for older children, providing a wider range of topics and more experimentation with language, humour and irony.
- There was a more developed sense of humour in some of the stories, although in a few cases it was still elementary and seemed to appear at the children's expense, instead of being for them.
- Although most authors did not 'talk down' to their readers, in some cases there appeared a kind of 'aesthetic' didacticism which seemed to try to force some of the literary values of 'adult' literature on some of the texts for young children, such as, for example, lengthy poetical descriptions of landscape.
- There were signs of a new equality between author and reader, although echoes of that earlier paternalistic note still lingered in some cases. Most texts had an omniscient narrator but in many cases this

Children's Books Discussed

Chávez Castañeda, Ricardo (1994) *El secreto de Gorco* Mexico, DF: CONACULTA/Corunda

Hinojosa, Francisco (1992) *La peor señora del mundo* Mexico, DF: Fondo de Cultura Económica

Rendón Ortiz, Gilberto (1984) *Grillito Socoyote en el circo de pulgas y otros cuentos de animales* La Habana: Casa de las Américas

Villoro, Juan (1992) *El profesor Ziper y la fabulosa guitarra eléctrica* Mexico, DF: CONACULTA/Alfaguara

narrator took the young characters more seriously, offering a bridge to the readers and allowing for more possibilities of participation and interpretation.

Since 1995, not only Hinojosa and Villoro but also many others have changed the tenor of children's literature, raising voices that challenge the past but still signal a search for a 'rhetoric', as described by Watson. The many new bookshops for children are crammed with novelties and the results of globalisation can be seen in the piles of books translated into Spanish (usually from English).²

There now exist several higher degree courses on children's literature and the international book fair has just celebrated its silver anniversary. The input of specialists from other countries through conferences, workshops and publications, as well as that of experienced editors, is beginning to be felt (see for example, Goldin 1999 and Rey 2000). The profile of children's literature and reading has indeed been raised. However, amongst all the brightly coloured covers, it is still hard to find the authors who are writing and publishing in Mexico. A few, particularly Hinojosa, have become better known, but few children would be able to name any contemporary authors or illustrators. As new voices struggle to be heard – not just in contrast to voices of the past but through the deluge of new translations – it is perhaps more important than ever to keep listening out for them.³

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¹ This translation and all further ones are mine.

² There are, of course, still major problems in reaching all children in Mexico: socio-economic and geographic factors limit many children's access to books. However, many fine examples of story and illustration can be found in the free textbooks provided by the Ministry of Education to every child in the country. Several of the authors and illustrators mentioned in this article have contributed to these books.

³ In the second part of this article I will look in more detail at recent developments based on Mexican children's books from the last 25 years which have been selected as outstanding by two of the most experienced institutions in this area: IBBY-Mexico and the Spanish section of the International Youth Library in Munich.

2007 Summer Workshops

BOOKS IN SPANISH FOR YOUNG READERS

June 11–13 Current Issues: Books in Spanish for Young Readers

Three-day workshop to be conducted in English. \$115.

June 25–27 Books and Reading Strategies for Bilingual Students in Grades K–8

Three-day workshop to be conducted in English. \$115.

July 16–18 Books in Spanish for Children and Adolescents/Los libros en español para niños y adolescentes

Three-day workshop to be conducted in Spanish; however, Spanish-speaking ability is not required. \$115.

Workshop sessions will be from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. Students will be free to use the resources of the Center in the afternoons.

Enrolment is limited; early registration is definitely recommended.

For further information, please call +1 (760) 750-4070, email Dr Isabel Schon at ischon@csusm.edu or write: Barahona Center for the Study of Books in Spanish for Children and Adolescents; California State University San Marcos; 333 S. Twin Oaks Valley Road, San Marcos, CA 92096-0001; fax: +1 (760) 750-4073.

This is the first book to be published in the USA by the distinguished Lat, recipient of many Malaysian honours including, in 1994, the Malaysian honorific title, Datuk. A reader experiences a warm personal welcome to the world of Mat, a Muslim boy growing up in rural Malaysia in the 1950s. In words supplemented by cartoon art, Lat introduces a cast of fully developed characters and evokes a clear sense of place and time in this affectionate, very funny and human account. In his remote Malaysian village, Mat fishes and swims in the river, attends Arabic school, cares for his younger brother and sister and runs free with his friends until it is time to leave for boarding school in the big city. Meanwhile, the traditional agricultural life in his village (KAMPUNG) is gradually giving way to tin mines and other manufacturing.

Originally published in Malaysia in 1979, this classic is the first in the *Kampung Boy* series, popular with readers in Southeast Asia. Matt Groening calls *KAMPUNG BOY* 'one of the all-time great cartoon books'.

Glenna Sloan



LAT

THE KAMPUNG BOY [Kampung Boy]

Kuala Lumpur: Berita Publishing 1979 and New York: Roaring Brook/First Second (first USA edn) 2006

141pp ISBN 13:9781596431218
ISBN 10:1596431210

(graphic novel, 8+)

Shortlisted for the 2006 Children's Choice Book Awards by the Children's Book Council of Australia is this sequel to DRAGONKEEPER. Set in China in the hazy past of the Han dynasty, it combines a rich mix of fantasy (a talking dragon understood only by magically endowed authentic dragon keepers, such as the main character, Ping), heroics (Ping now has charge of the last surviving dragon, Kai), history (carefully researched details of ancient China), and saga (Ping's journey to find the family that sold her into slavery). Ping seeks to protect Kai from the same evil forces that threatened Danzi, the dragon of DRAGONKEEPER. This enthralling and captivating tale tells of her success.

Margaret Zeegers



Carole Wilkinson

GARDEN OF THE PURPLE DRAGON

Fitzroy, Victoria, Australia:
Black Dog Books 2005

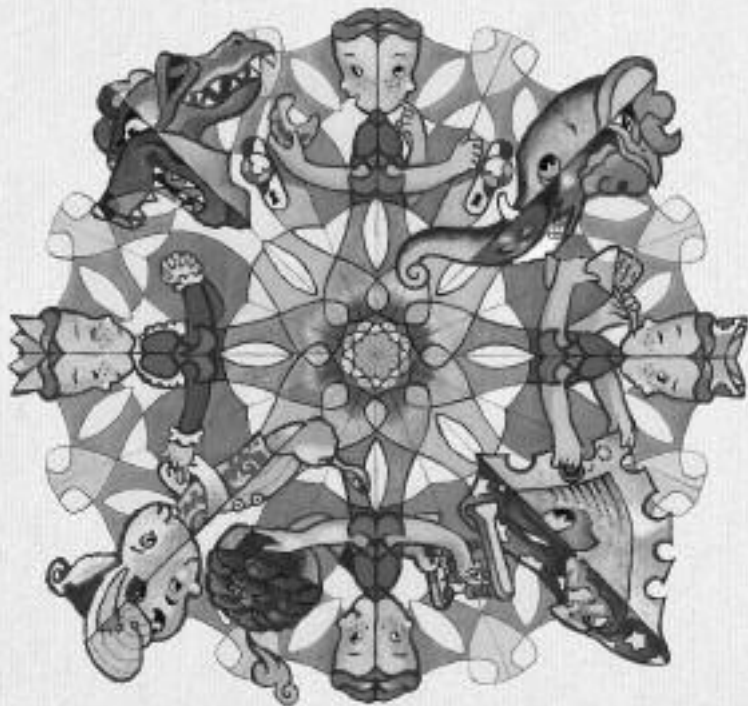
354pp ISBN 1876372656 (fiction, 10+)

Hypertextual Elements in the Interactive Fiction of Trivizas

by ANGELA YANNICOPOULOU



Angela Yannicopoulou is an
associate professor of literacy
and children's literature at the
University of the Aegean, Greece



• In this article, Angela Yannicopoulou explores
• the interactive work of Eugene Trivizas,
• where literature and technology move closer
• to a new exciting concept of narrative

In the new era of multimedia and hypermedia, children's books have undergone major modifications, transferring concepts from electronic media into the book domain. It is as if the new technology has inoculated books for young audiences with a variety of elements which wait for the reader to activate them. In today's digital culture, children's books are strongly influenced by radical changes, such as connectivity, interactivity and access (Dresang 1999).

Bearing in mind that hypertext is a network of nodes and the links between them, where textual chunks (verbal and visual) can be creatively connected to each other, children's literature can be regarded as hypertextual whenever it denies the compulsory linearity of reading and offers different narrative possibilities to be activated. Contemporary children's books with non-linear plotline development seem to approach hypermedia and accede to a hypertextual style.

Some of today's fiction picturebooks abandon linear progression and strict plotline and adopt a hypertextual method in the presentation of the fictional material. The simplest of these offer a variety of alternative possible endings, permitting the reader to select the one s/he likes more (for example, Emily Gravett's *Wolves*). On the other

hand, some books contain parts that function as typical ‘hotspots’ that allow the readers to ‘point and click’ on them and delve into narrative side tracks. In Langen’s *Letters from Felix*, for example, tangible letters tucked into real envelopes are available to the reader/user of the story to be pulled out/‘clicked on’, if s/he wants extra information. However, beyond doubt, the most quintessential example of the non-linear book in the realm of children’s literature is Macaulay’s *Black and White*, a picturebook that is a ‘prototype of literature for a young person of the electronic age’ (Dresang and McClelland 1995).

Children’s literature can be regarded as hypertextual whenever it denies the compulsory linearity of reading and offers different narrative possibilities to be activated :

Another kind of book constantly confronts readers with different reading options that allow them to shape their own unique stories. The prominent role of choice in the creation of those interactive narratives is mirrored in the title of Goodhart’s book *You Choose*, where a whole range of scenarios wait for the reader/protagonist to activate them by selecting places, friends, transportation and certain activities. In addition, in Robinson’s *Mixed Up Fairy Tales*, split pages allow the reader/user to mix and match fairy tales, creating his/her unique sensible or nonsensical fictional constructions, while Sharratt’s *Once Upon a Time...* and *Pirate Pete* permit their readers/users to create and recreate their own personal stories by slotting any one out of six cut-outs into a colourful page.

As children’s books approach new technologies, adopting a vast array of electronic

characteristics traditionally incompatible with print literature, rhizomatically structured narratives manage to transfer non-linear plots to the book domain. Two of Trivizas’ books, *Ta 88 Dolmadakia* [The 88 stuffed vine leaves] and *Ta 33 Roz Roumbinia* [The 33 pink rubies] are striking examples of the digital civilisation’s influence on children’s books in the Greek publishing market. Although neither of these books is endowed with an equally unconventional visual text – black-and-white drawings decorate each page translating into the visual modality the verbal text – they constitute a genuine example of the ‘handheld hypertext’ (Dresang 1999). Trivizas’ books strongly reject the linear flow of plot development and, adopting a network of hotspots and hyperlinks, permit readers to construct their unique personal stories, actualising a plot-version among a constellation of narrative possibilities. Trivizas calls both books ‘fairy-multi-tales’ and ‘multi-branched tales’, and adds on each title page two successive descriptive subtitles: ‘A magic book with a thousand stories hidden in the same story’ and ‘A quaint and rare book that you read again and again and every time it tells you a different story’.

In practice, non-linearity is achieved by the addition of two or more narrative options at the end of each page, which, eventually, send the readers to different pages, where they are again confronted with more options that permit varied reading routes resulting in a branch-like structure of alternative stories. In *Ta 88 Dolmadakia*, for example, the first page starts with young Emma who is at home and hears the telephone ringing. Then, a boxed text intervenes asking the reader directly: ‘What do you want her to do?’ After that, two options follow: ‘To pick it up? Go to page 55. Not to pick it up? Go to page 101’. After choosing, let’s say, the first one, the reader goes to page 55 and then again



Ζαίσα κόνισε α' ένα σήματ' από την οδό Μεσοκομλάκι, στην οδό 33, που'ετσι δουλεύει, ποτ' μην το ξεχάσας!) ένα κάρτατ' με φωνήτ' και κόνισετ' κόνισετ' και το λέγατ' Έματ'. Η Έματ' είπατ' να μ'ακούσ', δούλετ' θέλετ' και ένα

πότ' άλλοτ' χρονοφόροτ' Έματ' ήθετ' μόντ' στο σπίτι της και τότε τη χρονοφόροτ', ντριντ', ντρινωντ', ... γράφαστ' το πλάνουτ'. Η Έματ' σκέφτετ' να λίγα αναπορώσαστ'.

7

Η ΟΔΟΣ ΤΑ ΑΡΧΕΙ Η ΕΜΜΑ, ΝΑ ΣΗΜΕΙΩΣΕΙ ΤΟ ΤΗΛΕΦΩΝΟ Ή ΝΑ ΑΝΤΙ ΤΟ ΣΗΜΕΙΩΣΕΙ.

ΝΑ ΤΟ ΣΗΜΕΙΩΣΕΙ ➡ Διάλεξτε το τηλέφωνο στο οποίο 53

ΝΑ ΜΗΝ ΤΟ ΣΗΜΕΙΩΣΕΙ ➡ Διάλεξτε το τηλέφωνο στο οποίο 101

s/he reads: ‘She rushed out and picked up the phone. “Hello! Who is calling?” Emma asked.’ Again, another boxed text encourages the reader to decide who s/he wants to be on the phone. Four options – Nancy, her best friend; a stranger with a deep voice; the prime minister of Peru; or the coach of the Green Team – send the reader to four different pages. This pattern is repeated throughout the book and as soon as the reader comes to an end, eventually s/he can go back again to an already-read page (eg the first one) in order to select another possibility (eg not to answer the phone) and start again with a new story.

• *Trivizas’ books strongly reject the linear flow of plot development and ... permit readers to construct their unique personal stories ... [which he] calls ‘fairy-multi-tales’ and ‘multi-branched tales’*

As in the popular ‘Choose your Own Adventure’ series, the readers of Trivizas’ books can initiate, from the same raw fictional material, several potential stories, following every time different reading routes. The author provides the story space, while the reader develops his/her own storylines, responding creatively to the books’ inherent challenge for unconventional reading. Since the books adopt hypertextual presentation, they firmly resist the normative suggestions of linear fiction’s one-way approach and allow their readers to build their own unique stories following personal navigations.

Furthermore, since Trivizas’ books consist of a great number of multi-interconnected nodes, they vigorously challenge the traditionally accepted concept of endings. It is amazing that there are 44 pages which conclude with the phrase THE END for *Ta 88 Dolmadakia* and 53 for *Ta 33 Roz Roumbinia*. The reading process is so

• *Trivizas’ books vigorously challenge the traditionally accepted concept of endings*

prolonged that Trivizas' books seem to compromise the uncompromisable: firstly, to accommodate within a limited space – 161 pages for *Ta 88 Dolmadakia* – an unlimited number of stories; secondly, the same page achieves the contradiction of being and not being the last page. On page 161 of *Ta 88 Dolmadakia*, the picture presents a young boy who heads literally and metaphorically towards the end of his (reading) journey, while a road sign sends him (and the reader) back with the warning: 'Attention! Attention! This seems to be the last page. But in reality it is not.'

***Trivizas' books ... appertain
more to the realm of
ever-changing oral stories
than to the definite form
of print literature*** :

A characteristic of hyperliterature, which is also observed in Trivizas' books, is flexibility that clearly objects to fixed forms and definite textual patterns. In contrast with the immobility of printed pages, the constant shaping and reshaping of malleable, hypertextual narratives create an 'ever-varying chameleon text' (Lanham 1993), which, due to the vagueness of its form, functions rather as a moving target than as a fixed, observable work of art. And, although hypertextual narratives, such as Trivizas' books, are communicated through the printed word, they appertain more to the realm of ever-changing oral stories than to the definite form of print literature, clearly belonging to a 'secondary orality' (Ong 1982). It is amazing that after reading the very same book, different children come out with a vast number of totally different stories depending upon their reading routes.

In addition, both of Trivizas' books, as genuine examples of hypertextual literature,

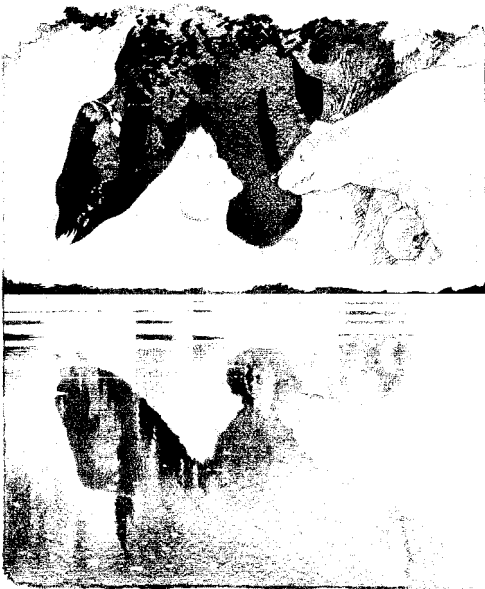


celebrate interactivity. Since interactivity leads to the active participation of the readers in the creation of the story, the audience is not only given the possibility to intervene in a meaningful way within the construction itself, but is also entitled to co-construct the actual end product. By virtue of interactivity the readers, instead of receiving the text passively, intervene creatively in it and, since the authority of the narrator is passed on to them, the narrative starts to resemble a game. As the story splits into a number of forked fictional paths, the reader is free to turn left or right, run through the exit or hesitate in front of narrative crossroads, start wandering around or rush towards the climax. The hyper-story, both narrative and game-like, creates a kind of fiction that resembles a game and calls for a viewer-reader who is also a player.

Lacking a dominant story-version and adopting non-linear narrative subplots, Trivizas' interactive books are genuinely postmodern picturebooks. Both books, constantly reminding their audience that they are reading words on a page, are clearly typical metafictional texts

***The hyper-story, both
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who is also a player*** :

(Waugh 1993), cultivating a narrative stance which distances readers from the text and establishes an approach where analysis predominates over empathy. Metafiction, as a self-conscious fiction leading to an interesting interplay between reality and fantasy, belongs to the general culture of postmodernism, which prevails in today's culture. As in the mirror images on the cover of *Tà 88 Dolmadakia*, where the contrast between the dark and light reflections creates a twofold reality, a princess and a bear in the forest and a lone rider, metafictional texts permeate the fictional universe with a considerable relativity that inevitably exceeds notions concerning reality. This image recalls the double portrait of the woman in the print advertisement of *Sliding Doors* (1998), a post-modern film, which, based on two versions of reality, explores the hypothetical question 'What would have happened if...?'



The abolition of the narrative's linearity results in a structural fluidity that liberates readers from the literary norms and allows them to construct their own stories. Since hypertextual

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writing has employed a plethora of parallel reading options, it rejects the self-satisfaction of linear narratives and promises a pluralistic, dialogical text that resists 'the monologue of the printed page' (Moulthrop 1994). In contrast to books that are founded upon the notions of centrality and hierarchy, Trivizas' books seem to reject predetermined story plots and a singular approach. As the reader invades the fictional space, s/he is allowed to experience an abundance of valued reading adventures, while as s/he contributes actively to the formation of narratives, s/he gains the status of the co-creator.

However, although such books liberate readers from the tyranny of the correct interpretation, another problem arises: is the hyper-reader, who can also be proclaimed as a 'wreeder' (Rau 2000) – instilling the reading process with the creative qualities of the writer – really free to construct his/her own personal narratives? It really seems that the reader of interactive fiction is confronted with another aspect of the metafictional paradox (Hutcheon 1980); his/her freedom to navigate multilinear narrative paths is confined by pre-decided destinations/nodes-and-links which are impossible to ignore. Although readers are liberated from the rigid structure of a linear book-bound text, they are always dependent upon the author who has constantly been there before them. Sometimes readers are free to select, but only between a limited number of pre-existing options. In some cases they are presented with options/links; but

since they are pre-imposed by the creator, they occasionally differ from those desired by the readers (Miall and Dobson 2001). Readers are free to choose, but the author's ideas regarding the consistency of the nodes and hotspots prove rather complicated and confusing for the 'struggling' audience (Dobrin 1994).

Moreover, regardless of the links' appropriateness, it seems that hyperliterature tends to create a sense of wonder and insecurity in its audience. Readers often feel confused as they have to follow uncharted reading routes and are allowed to disembark from their literary journey at a number of destinations, none of which has been suggested by the author. As the hypertext's readers confront a textual labyrinth – a gloomy metaphorical description (Douglas-Yellowlees 1989), which has been recently substituted by the optimistic image of an entertaining fun park (Douglas-Yellowlees 1997) – they experience the frustration of an unsatisfactory reading. Regardless of the route of their personal literary voyage, readers often feel that they have not managed to choose the most exciting fictional material, to reveal the best potential story, to follow the most thrilling narrative path. The electronic reader of cyber-literature adopts a surfing-like approach, which deters him/her from diving into the fictional universe and being absorbed by it (Yakoumatou and Nikolaidou 2004). It is amazing that when children read Trivizas' books for the first time they are

***Hyperliterature tends to
create a sense of wonder and
insecurity in its audience*** :

constantly asking if they have chosen the 'right' option. Also, in group readings in the classroom, children often accuse their classmates of not getting the most exciting story, due to their unsuccessful choices.

Regarding the reception of Trivizas' books, publishing data and children's comments reveal that both hypertextual books have been warmly welcomed in the Greek market. One child, after reading the book, said: 'I've liked it very much because you read the same book many times and every time you read a different book.' Maybe the unique device of transferring hypertextual fiction into the book domain and the presence of a 'writerly' (Barthes 1975) or 'open' (Eco 1989) text, which enables readers to formulate their own stories, as well as the pleasing interactiveness of the books, lead children towards a wholehearted appreciation of a number of stories of fairy-multi-tales that

***Literature and new
technologies are coming
closer, actualising the
etymological relationship
between text and technical*** :

might never have been published and read, but for the striking novelty of a 'handheld book'. In some cases the interactiveness of the books seems to have compensated their audience for the poor aesthetic merits of the narratives.

Nevertheless, it becomes obvious that hyperliterature, either on screen or on the page, should be evaluated differently from traditional fixed-print narratives (Kendall 1999). Since it consists of a plethora of flexible fictional texts and is conceived more as 'moving sand' than a permanent construction, hypertextual literature asks eagerly for a forthcoming new poetics (Comte 2001; Marsh 2001).

In spite of the apparent long-standing gap between literature and new technologies, hypertextual elements increasingly adopted by children's books tend to reconcile two seemingly opposing aspects of human civilisation. Literature and new technologies are coming closer, actualis-

Children's Books Discussed

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 Gravett, Emily (2005) *Wolves* New York: Macmillan Children's Books
 Langen, Annette (2003) *Letters from Felix: A Little Rabbit on a World Tour* (illus Constanza Droop) New York: Parklane Publishing
 Macaulay, David (1990) *Black and White* Boston: Houghton Mifflin
 Robinson, Hilary (2005) *Mixed Up Fairy Tales* (illus Nick Sharratt) London: Hodder Children's Books
 Sharratt, Nick (2002) *Once Upon a Time...* London: Walker Books
 Sharratt, Nick (2003) *Pirate Pete* London: Walker Books
 Trivizas, Eugene (1997) *Tā 88 Dolmadakia* [The 88 stuffed vine leaves] (illus Rania Varvaki) Athens: Kalendis
 Trivizas, Eugene (2003) *Tā 33 Roz Roumbinia* [The 33 pink rubies] (illus Rania Varvaki) Athens: Kalendis

ing the etymological relationship between *text* and *technical* (Marsh 2001), which in Greek is also represented by the reversed compound words *logotechnia* (literature) and *technologia* (technology). In the current transitional phase towards a new concept of narrative, electronic media have influenced not simply the way stories are told, but also their very nature (Hunt 2000), exploring possibilities, creating changes and pushing literature towards new frontiers. Considering that it has taken children's literature nearly 400 years of cultural evolution to unfold its potential in print form, it would be paradoxical to 'expect a fully developed digital narrative from birth, much like Athena springing, fully grown, from the head of Zeus' (Madej 2003). It seems that it will take several decades before evaluations concerning the influence of the digital civilisation on literature can be made. The first examples of the mutual approach of literature and new technologies suggest that it will be worth waiting for.

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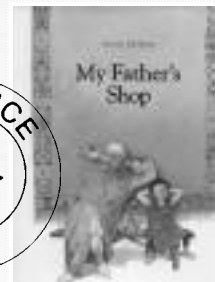


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Young Mustafa enjoys helping his father in their Moroccan rug shop. As he parades through the street, draped in a colourful carpet spoiled for sale by a hole, a rooster follows him. Tourists in the marketplace, fascinated as they watch the two, begin to join the strange procession. Through good-humoured conversation with the visitors, Mustafa learns how roosters sound when they crow in France, Spain, England and Japan, quite different than in Morocco. Then he leads the tourists, potential customers, to his father's shop; two achievements of this young problem solver that delight his father and the reader.

Ichikawa, a Japanese artist who lives in Paris, creates a feast for the eye, through the warm colours of the beautiful carpets and the bright clothing of the tourists and natives. Scenes of the shop and of Mustafa's parade through the marketplace followed by the rooster and eager tourists are alive with action and movement.

Glenna Sloan



SATOMI ICHIKAWA

MY FATHER'S SHOP

Paris: l'école des loisirs 2004. First American Edition La Jolla, CA: Kane Miller 2006

30pp

ISBN 13:9781929132997

ISBN 10:1929132999

(picturebook, 7–10)



Revival of an Old Image

The Story of Little Black Sambo in Japan

by TODAYAMA MIDORI



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••• *The controversial publishing history of Helen Bannerman's 1899 picturebook classic The Story of Little Black Sambo is chronicled here by TODAYAMA Midori, where in Japan it is still dogged by issues of bias and racism a century later*

In April 2005, a picturebook as controversial as it is famous was published in Japan – *The Story of Little Black Sambo*, written by Helen Bannerman, first published in London in 1899. Though this is the newest edition on the Japanese market, it is not in fact a new edition of the old story, but a republication of an edition which was allowed to go out of print by its original publisher. This current new version of the book has been published by a different publisher, however, not the company that originally published this version of

**The Story of Little Black
Sambo was once appreciated
as one of the most
important books in the
history of children's
literature in English**

the book. Perhaps the former publisher lost the copyright to this version after 50 years had passed since the first publication of that edition, in keeping with Japanese law. Or maybe the translator, who is now deceased, still keeps his copyright and the family who inherited the right agreed to this publication. Either way, it is not clear because details of the history of the copyright are not fully reported.

In any case, copies are now piled up on tables in almost every bookstore in Japan. And parents and grandparents are willing to buy it for children, whether they ask for it or not.

When it comes to publishing new versions of this century-old picturebook, Japan is not the exception. During this decade, some publishers in the USA have offered their own new versions, though it seems most of them are not published outside the USA.

The Story of Little Black Sambo was once appreciated as one of the most important books in the history of children's literature in English. Similarly, it was welcomed by other language cultures such as Spanish, Dutch, French, German, Danish, Arabic and Hebrew (Hay 1981), and there have also been many Japanese editions.

Both the text and the illustrations were written and drawn by the author around 1898 in India. It is well known that the author created the book for her young daughter. Perhaps that is one of the reasons why the text and the pictures are rather carefree, illogical and violent. It is supposed that Bannerman intentionally mingled the location and the characters just for fun. In a

review of the book written in its year of publication, it is clear that the reviewer welcomes its innovative attitude towards child readers:

His history was not written with one eye on parents and guardians, or the inconsistency of mixing up the African type of black with delightful adventures with tigers in an Indian jungle would never have been allowed to pass. As it is, Little Black Sambo makes his simple and direct appeal in the great realm of make-believe without paying the slightest attention to the unities or caring in the least about anything but the amusement of the little boys and girls for whom he was so obviously created. (The Spectator, 2 December 1899)

Bannerman had spent more than ten years in India before she wrote the book. As a child she lived in Madeira, where her father was a pastor, for about eight years. She was so familiar with those places that the fantasy she created was a mixture of India and Africa. The jungle, the site of the conflict between the African family and the Indian tigers, must be regarded as a site of violence, even though it seems minute. For the Bannermans the threat of tigers was a part of their own life. Yet for most readers the story has been one of 'delightful adventures', which they could enjoy in their remote and cosy playrooms.

The book was criticised several decades ago as a specimen of the British Empire and early-20th-century American racism. It has been thought to reflect stereotypical images of Africans and Indians or, worse, a mixture of both:

Helen Bannerman's Little Black Sambo is an especially telling case of eurocentrism. Here a family supposedly from India reveals a curious mixture of physical and cultural traits.... The child's name was unfortunately adopted by

white supremacists in America as a denigrating term for black males generally.... She also placed tigers of northern India in her setting of southern India.

(Watson 2001, p. 76)

The situation, however, is not the same in Britain and the USA. British publishers have published hardly any editions other than Bannerman's own original. This so-called original edition – for the pictures seem to have been redrawn by someone else later – is still sold in Britain. But it can be regarded as a historical relic because it seems not to have been recommended for children since the 1970s. It is now effectively a 'dead' book for children.

In the United States things are different and more complicated. First of all, in the US Bannerman's original has not been the only version of the book people have known as *The Story of Little Black Sambo*. There have been various editions illustrated by others, sometimes even with text by others. It took more than fifteen years before publishers started to offer their new versions. But when the early American versions came out, they had their own images of the family. Many of them depicted the family as black African or African-Americans, sometimes clearly located in Africa, yet most of the time in vaguely tropical climes.

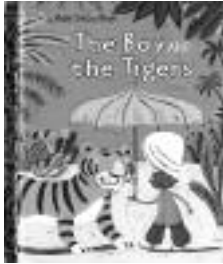
The colour of the faces in these editions varies from light brown to jet black. Especially in the early years, most of them were strongly influenced by the contemporary practice, popular since the 19th century, of 'black-ing-up' to play black characters. Performers, usually white, would blacken their faces completely and paint an exaggerated mouth in white and red. The name 'Sambo' was often used in performances of this kind, known as 'minstrel shows'. So, though Bannerman's original characters do not have such make-up, the association must have been effective for readers and later artists. Undoubtedly, these must be the editions which were called 'grotesque editions' by, for example, the African-American activist Alice Dalgliesh in the 1940s (quoted by Bader 1996).

But there were also some versions in which Sambo is very cute and almost effeminate like those by Eulalie (published first in 1921 but used as late as the 1970s). Or else the family was depicted as urban African-American to reflect changes in their living conditions.

A few versions have more oriental settings, for example, showing the father with a turban and the mother in a sari, but these represent no particular place. The appearance of Asian images of Sambo is rather a new phenomenon. Before 1950, there were few pictures of Sambo and his

The book was criticised several decades ago as a specimen of British Empire and early-20th-century American racism. It has been thought to reflect stereotypical images of Africans and Indians or, worse, a mixture of both





family as any kind of Asian. In other words, for a long time readers took the coexistence of tigers and African people for granted in the context of fantasy or nonsense. Later, in response to accusations of bias, editors remembered that tigers live only in Asia. With this kind of change in location, some characters lost their old names and got new ones that sounded a little bit Asian: for example, Mama Lata, Papa Pran in *The Story of Little Black Sambo*, illustrated by Judith Russell (Cherokee Publishing Company 1995) and Mamaji, Papaji, Babaji in *The Story of Little Babaji*, illustrated by Fred Marcellino (HarperCollins 1996). Sometimes even the title changed: *The Story of Little Babaji* (HarperCollins 1996); *Tigers for Supper*, illustrated by Phyllis Pollema-Cahill (Star Bright Books 1998); *The Boy and the Tiger*, illustrated by Valeria Petrone (Golden Press 2004). This new trend has invited criticism again, especially from Asian scholars. Usually the illustrations show a lack of precise knowledge of the culture, or even lack of interest. To Indian eyes, Marcellino's family presents images of Indians assimilated to Americans and images of Americans with brown faces playing at Indians of no particular place, period, class or custom (Susina 1999).

If the illustrator has the skill and the accuracy, the version becomes a curious hybrid of self-consciousness and historical truth. *The Story of Little Black Sambo* by Christopher H Bing (Handprint Books, 2003) is a sort of *tour de force* which gives both the images of the story and the

If the illustrator has the skill and the accuracy, the version becomes a curious hybrid of self-consciousness and historical truth

context of colonialism in those days simultaneously. He shows the characters as Black African and locates them in the historical setting of India in 1899. The large and beautifully decorated book was disguised to look as if it were published a century ago, using decoupage, old postcards with pictures of India, an old map of India, a portrait of Helen Bannerman,

puppets of the hero and tigers, dolls of a man and a woman in traditional Indian costumes, *trompe-l'oeil* of foxing on the edge of pages and loose binding in the middle. Old pages of newspaper are pasted in to convey the publisher's notice or the illustrator's acknowledgements. Inside, the illustrations are in strong colours with unique angles. It shows some influence



***The old stereotyped images
of 'black' people have
disappeared in these
American editions. Yet it is
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story itself is appropriate
for young readers***

of Chris Van Allsburg (whose name appears in the acknowledgements). It is said that it took Bing twenty years to make the new illustrations for this story. In creating his African figures, he was advised by Dr Henry Gates, Jr, a famous scholar of English literature and African studies.

One thing is clear: the old stereotyped images of 'black' people have disappeared in these American editions. Yet it is still debated whether the story itself is appropriate for young readers. Bing's version, though highly regarded by some critics, is still severely criticised. In 2006, New York Public Library with more than one hundred branches had only seven copies of this book and, as might be expected, its status is 'reference only'.

In 1953, the first full translation of *The Story of Little Black Sambo* was published in Japan. The publishing company was Iwanami Shoten, one of the most esteemed publishers in the country, established about one hundred years ago. Over the years it has dealt with many academic works and literary classics, including those of children's literature. It is the publisher of the translation of *Winnie-the-Pooh*, *Mary Poppins*, the *Chronicles of Narnia*, the *Earthsea* series, many of the works of Astrid Lindgren, Erich Kästner, EL Konigsburg, and others. Its publication of *The Story of Little Black Sambo* was the symbolic start of its foreign children's literature list. After the years of war and nationalism, Japanese children at last enjoyed the pleasure of nonsensical books or fantastic stories which were not acceptable during Japan's dark period.

The editors' selection of this book as one of the first in their new series of children's literature was doubtless well intended. Unfortunately, however, they chose neither the original edition nor any other less offensive one but a 1920's American edition with clearly stereotypical illustrations. The copy they used as original text was *The Black Sambo* illustrated by Frank Dobias (New York: Macmillan, 1927). Later, the translator MITSUYOSHI Natsuya explained that they had chosen it because Bannerman's original pictures seemed too crude and amateurish for young children. In fact, Dobias' work does organise the text and pictures far better than Bannerman's. With their matt and clear colours, bold lines and geometric patterns, they are highly stylised, particularly in art deco style. However, this means that the human characters' skins are pure black as if cut out from black paper, their faces are as round as the full moon and their lips are as red as Sambo's jacket.

Child readers in Japan loved the story as much as in the USA and Britain, partly, no doubt, because the book was one of the first imported stories after World War II. For the young, Western culture was new; people longed for rich and liberal images of Western life in comparison with that of hard times in Japan after the country's defeat in the war. The care given by Sambo's parents seemed admirable in the decline of patriarchy that had led the country into war. The image of piles of pancakes with melted butter was especially adored and many grown-ups confess that they remember this scene best. The vivid

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colours themselves possibly had an impact on showing things had changed.

Children loved the story so much that other publishers began to issue different editions. The number of versions was constantly increasing; soon almost every year several editions were published. With only one or two exceptions, most of the versions were illustrated by Japanese artists. Some but not all of these versions had the same black-faced figures as in the American ones. One version, made in 1957, has figures of dolls beautifully dressed in Indian attire. Many of the versions that came flooding out in those days had *manga* – or *anime*-like – characters, sometimes ‘cute’ but sometimes crude. Unlike in the USA, the illustrators’ list includes the names of highly regarded picture-book artists, for example, SEGAWA Yasuo (1966) or OTA Daihachi (1979). Yet curiously, Bannerman’s original was never published, perhaps for the same reason as before.

In 1965 the story was included in a textbook of Japanese language arts for second graders. This meant that the government regarded this story as appropriate for the classroom, because textbooks had to be authorised by the government. The use of the story in education encouraged more publication. By the end of the 1980s, there were more than 50 versions published, including minor changes and out-of-prints.

Criticism of the book emerged apparently all of a sudden, beginning with an article in the *Washington Post* about the stereotypes of Africans that survived in Japan (‘Old Black Stereotypes Find New Lives in Japan’, 22 July 1988). The reporter did not mention *The Story of Little Black Sambo*, but soon with other images or characters appearing on promotional products, the various versions of the story were severely criticised as racist. Some Japanese activists called for the books to be withdrawn. Some publishers hesitated to stop shipping, but Iwanami Shoten was quick to respond to the new mood, and so the most popular version disappeared in 1988. By the following year, all the other publishers had also made the same decision, and all sales were discontinued.

In fact, some Japanese critics of children’s literature were already familiar with the controversy about this book in other countries. In the December 1974 issue of *Ehon*, a picturebooks magazine, most of the contributors were against the book in any version. However, the criticism did not make sense to most of the readers. Even some critics (mostly not of children’s literature proper) thought the decision of the publishers too rash and called it censorship. Shortly afterwards, a publisher produced a new version which was intended to be inoffensive. This edition was welcomed and is still on the market. Therefore, Japanese readers have had the book in some kind of edition or other, apart from a short period of nine months or so. Then in 1999, a translation of the original finally appeared. After the publication of

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the translation of Bannerman's text, we have been in the same situation as the USA. In other words, it seemed that the demand for the book was well met. Yet, many Japanese readers did not think so. The republication of the first Japanese edition has revealed that for most of the readers, especially those past their twenties, this is the only edition that is regarded as the real book, even though there are several problems with this view.

It is, of course, quite usual to regard the original edition of a book as a literary or artistic work, at least for many specialists of children's literature. In the case of picturebooks, especially, the original pictures possibly are the most appropriate reflection of the author's intention. More than likely, this is a phenomenon that stems from the Romantic worship of the originality of artists. Yet, literary criticism usually views works as historic products that reflect the values of their time. If another artist takes an older text and illustrates it, then this new edition must be placed in its own period, since the illustrator's interpretation might be influenced by contemporary culture.

The 'new' version of *Little Black Sambo* that we are considering here was originally produced in 1927, in the USA. The faces of the human characters are jet black, in contrast to the flat colours of red, blue, yellow, green and purple. Their eyes are round and white with a small black dot inside, and the lips are large and pure red, like the

ones you see in a clown's make-up. We do not hesitate to call such characteristics stereotypes of African people in those days. This kind of representation was shared widely in Western culture and in those countries that wished to emulate it, such as Japan. Even in the 1950s, Japanese readers thought that the images in the Iwanami version were proper and cute, and suitable for the young children who were the target audience.

But more than half a century has passed since the first publication of this edition in Japan. In that time we had thought that Japanese society had changed and was aware of the current attitude towards such old stereotypes. These days, most of the English textbooks for high school students include stories about the fight against discrimination by, for example, Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks and Nelson Mandela. Many Japanese youngsters nowadays love hip-hop music – as popularised mainly by African-Americans. As Hollywood became more sensitive about its products, audiences were exposed to less biased representations of various ethnicities. And yet, the republication of this more than 50-year-old version of *Sambo* pleases readers, and few in the media seem to be worried. Indeed you can see the readers' comments on the pages of Amazon.co.jp. On 26 December 2005 there were around 70 comments; many expressed their satisfaction that now at last they could purchase the book they loved as children. Many of them know that this book has been criticised as biased. One person confesses that after reading it again, it is quite difficult to hand the copy over to young children. But most of the voices say that the book itself is not guilty, rather it is those who see racism in the book. Worse still is the status of this book in the public libraries, where history of the criticism of the book – even the history of discussion among themselves – seems to have been forgotten. Almost all the libraries now circulate the 2005 republication, and many of their copies are on loan.

In May 2005, a book dealing with the history of Japan's encounter with Africans, FUJITA Midori's *Afurika 'Hakken'* [The 'discovery' of Africa], was published by Iwanami Shoten. The author argues that images of Africans in Japan have been strongly influenced by Western culture, complicated by the fact that Japanese people have had little experience of meeting 'real' Africans. And so many Japanese readers of *The Story of Little Black Sambo* are still living in a fantasy world. In their fantasy, they are innocent because they do not mean any harm. Most of these readers are grown-ups, so this is a problem not of children's culture in Japan but that of adults.

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When 6-year-old Ryan Hreljac learned about the lack of safe drinking water in many parts of the world, he set out to earn \$70 to help build a well in Africa. Through a newspaper article, others heard of his efforts and began to donate to what is now the Ryan's Well Foundation, which to date has raised over \$1,000,000 to provide clean water for more than 350,000 people.

As the successful project flourished, Ryan and his family journeyed to Africa where they met a young orphan, Akana Jimmy, at risk in war-torn Uganda. How the Hreljacs rescued and eventually adopted Jimmy provides additional suspense to a story of challenge and persistence that leads to hard-won happy conclusions. One caring child can make a difference in the world. A straightforward account illustrated with striking photographs tells his inspirational story.

Glenna Sloan



HERB SHOVELLER

RYAN AND JIMMY: AND THE WELL IN AFRICA THAT BROUGHT THEM TOGETHER

Toronto: Kids Can Press 2006
55pp ISBN 1553379675

(non-fiction picturebook, 8-12)



IBBY's 30th World Congress in Macau

• *An official report of the IBBY congress in Macau can be found in the Focus IBBY section of this issue. Here, Joan Glazer gives a more personal account. Decide for yourself if it is definitely the same congress!*

When I attended my first professional conference, I was still a graduate student, and I was required, together with another student, to write a report on the conference. My partner and I designed our report partly as a parody of an earlier report, one in which the returning students hardly mentioned the conference itself but gave full coverage to the city in which it was held, with special emphasis on the restaurants. In the years since that first experience, I have come to understand that a conference is not just the professional sessions. These are central, of course, and they provide the intellectual stimulation and new ideas that focus our thoughts long after the programme has concluded. Yet the conference experience also includes the venue, and, yes, the food as well, the conversations held between sessions, the celebrations and awards and the business of the sponsoring organisation. And this is especially true of IBBY congresses, which convene only every other year and consist of participants from all over the world.

The congress venue was moved from Beijing to Macau in April. That gave CBBY four months to reorganise the conference. It was shortened from five to three days, condensing the content by moving evening events to the central three days and eliminating what had been free evenings. Many of us already had our airline tickets to Beijing, nonrefundable of course. Free transportation was provided from Beijing to Macau and back for those congress participants.

by JOAN GLAZER



Joan Glazer is professor emerita of education, Rhode Island College, USA; she is also president of Bookbird Inc and a former member of the IBBY Executive Committee

We got clear instructions about the transfer, but the change of plan meant that participants who had booked early had to get a visa to spend a night in China, go through customs two extra times, and stand in two extra rounds of airport lines. For my flight from the US, I stood in line to get my boarding pass and get my luggage ticketed, then in line to watch my luggage get screened, then in line to clear security, then in line to have my boarding pass stamped to show that I had a visa, and finally in line to board the plane. And then in Beijing, we waited in line at counter 14, only to be told that the monitor guiding us there was incorrect and we should be at counter 13. There was no one working at counter 13, but the line for Macau dutifully moved over.

***Exactly how tired was I?
Tired enough to let everyone
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After standing for over an hour, some sat on the area where baggage was checked. This, however, flashed the weight of the recumbent person for all to see. Exactly how tired was I? Tired enough to let everyone know my weight? The agent who finally came to counter 13 told us that she could not help us but changed her mind upon seeing our expressions.

We arrived in Macau at night, crossing the bridge from Taipei where the airport is located and seeing a city of sparkling lights. Macau has been a special administrative region of the People's Republic of China since 1999 and as such has different regulations than does the mainland. Among the articles prohibited by customs on the mainland, as stated on the China Customs form, in addition to the usual explosives, drugs and large amounts of currency, were 'Printed matter, films, photographs ... tapes ... compact discs ... computers and other articles which are detrimental to the political, economic, cultural and moral interests of China.' In fact, some of



the participants who listed their occupation as 'writer' on the visa application had to write a letter stating that they would not write anything 'negative' about China either while there or after their return home.

Each of us came away from the congress with special memories. For some it was seeing Macau itself, visiting the Portuguese section, shopping in the downtown area, seeing the A-Ma Temple with its various pavilions

***Participants who listed their
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• associated with Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism and
• folk beliefs, staring up at the facade at the Ruins of St
• Paul's, viewing the city from atop the Macau Tower.
• For IBBY members, I don't think it was getting
• strapped into a harness and bungee jumping from the
• observation deck of the tower, 233 metres, even if one
• would get 'an exclusive T-shirt, certificate and
• membership card', though I could be wrong.

I'll remember, among other things, the efficiency and graciousness of our Chinese hosts. One could not help but notice the importance of the Macau New Chinese Youth Association, the Association of Chinese Students of Macau and the Macau Publishers Association.

At this 30th world congress, coinciding with the 20th anniversary of the founding of the Chinese section of IBBY, speakers addressed both the successes and the difficulties of getting books into the hands of children. At the opening session, publisher Brian Wafawarowa from Cape Town noted that on the continent of Africa up to 95 per cent of books for young people are textbooks. He talked of the need to go beyond curriculum requirements and to encourage a free flow of books among countries. He observed that at the airport he saw nearly every adult reading a book, but children there were listening rather than reading, headphones on. His audience recognised the pattern he identified. His comments were reinforced by Chinese author Qin Wenjun, who talked about children relying on visual images and about books being in competition with television. There were nods of understanding and agreement in this audience, representative of 70 countries.

Kang Woo-Hyon from the Republic of Korea described Nami Island's Children's International Book Festival which in 2005 had 34 and in 2006 had 67 countries represented. His PowerPoint presentation captivated everyone, but even more captivating was his explanation of how they had no money but always got someone to pay. If listeners had cartoon thought bubbles above their heads, there would have been a room full of 'What a superb event!' followed by 'Is there any way this man could come teach us how to get things done with no money?'

The congress was structured with an opening ceremony, plenary sessions and other specific events that were the only offerings in their particular time slot. In addition, there were seminars and storytelling sessions, several at the same time so that one was forced to make choices. Participants exchanged information from sessions during the breaks, always with tea or coffee and some delicious bite-sized delicacy. 'We've got to stop eating so much,' we'd tell one another as we headed back to the buffet table.

Everyone had the chance to hear Tayo Shima's plenary session presentation of how art, in the form of picturebooks, 'traverses cultures and distances'. They could respond to Elisa Bonilla Rius from Mexico as she described books as being both mirrors and windows; mirrors to see ourselves and windows to know others. They could empathise with



• ***Is there any way this man***
 • ***could come teach us how***
 • ***to get things done with***
 • ***no money?***

Katherine Paterson as she discussed with Birgitta Fransson her winning of the 2006 Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award, noting that the United States pays little attention to authors. How nice that Sweden does! They could decide whether they, like Wang Quangen of China, believed that the mission of children's literature is the cultivation of the 'next generation's spiritual life'.

Participants had to choose, however, between hearing storytellers from four different countries or talks on the theme of reading of underprivileged children, or on children's freedom and space. They had to decide whether to hear about children's literature and ethics or attend the children's forum. In the forum, children from Macau, Hong Kong and nearby regions spoke individually, usually in English, first giving a statement about the importance of reading and then telling a story. Many listeners felt that the statements had a rather rehearsed quality, with the content being what adults might have told them to say. Ah – but the stories and the dramatic way in which the children told them! The audience was enthralled. In particular, the listeners were touched by Wei Guanchong. Here is how Jay Heale from South Africa described his experience:

Then, beside me on the front row, I became aware of the next speaker – Wei Guanchong, a boy of about eleven who was blind. He was sitting, shaking with apprehension, and a previous girl speaker was stroking his arm in encouragement. She and another girl led him onto the stage where he told us how Braille books were difficult to read because they cannot indicate the subtle changes of tone so important in the Chinese language. He had been cheered by the story of Helen Keller. And he loved being read to.

His two guides helped him to an electric keyboard on stage where with increasing confidence he played some Mozart. To me, this was a most moving moment.

For many participants, the highlights were the celebrations and awards. The opening Andersen Award ceremony and reception began with Andersen jury president Jeffrey Garrett announcing the awards and giving the background of the winning author Margaret Mahy and winning illustrator Wolf Erlbruch, his joy in the selections delightfully obvious. Chieko Suemori brought greetings from the Nissan Motor Company, host of the reception. Erlbruch, from Germany, unable to attend, sent a video of his acceptance speech. Margaret Mahy, from New Zealand, appeared in person, reciting her poem, 'Down the Back of the Chair', as part of her acceptance talk. The poem opens as Dad has lost his keys and 2-year-old Mary says that she often finds things down the back of the chair. He reaches down, and six verses recount what he finds.

*Some hairy string and a diamond ring
Were down the back of the chair,
Pineapple peel and a conger eel
Were down the back of the chair
A sip, a sup, a sop, a song,
A spider seven inches long,
No wonder that it smells so strong
Down the back of the chair.*

The rhythm and Mahy's delivery had everyone smiling.¹

The reception/dinner that followed began with a parade of chefs, each holding a platter on which was a roast suckling pig, with red electric lights. This first course was followed by twelve others and then two desserts. This elegant dinner was matched by that at the closing ceremony. Again, there were thirteen courses (and two desserts), including deep-fried crab pincer filled with shrimp paste; sautéed coral limpets, squids and fresh asparagus; braised turnip filled with scallops and bird's nest ...

During this four-hour dinner there were closing comments from many officials of the area and of



the Chinese section of IBBY, then entertainment by incredibly talented children. Acrobats, singers, dancers, and what I'm certain will be future opera stars were on stage continually.

Other awards were not as elaborate as the Andersen reception or the closing ceremony, but they are also crucial to an organisation that works to get good books to children. After each of the IBBY Honour books was shown on screen and described by Liz Page, these being a selection of outstanding recently published books by authors, illustrators and translators from IBBY member nations, those honorees who were present were introduced and presented with a certificate. Also presented, later in the conference, were the IBBY-Asahi Reading Promotion Awards, given to a group or institution whose activities in promoting reading are judged to be making a lasting contribution to programmes that promote reading for children and young people. This year's awards went to the Foundation ABCXXI – Emotional Health Program: All of Poland Reads to Kids and to the Mongolian Children's Mobile Library Project.

Not quite as much fun, but equally important, were the sessions devoted to IBBY business. The general assembly meets at each congress, with designated delegates from each IBBY member country, who are the ones to cast votes. Several amendments to the IBBY statutes were passed

this year, financial reports were accepted, and new members for the IBBY executive committee were elected. The executive committee meets before each congress and then meets again afterwards, this time with both outgoing and newly elected members present, designed to promote continuity. There were no contentious issues this year, as there have been in past years, but it was good to see written copies of the statutes distributed.

The forum and open debate, a continuation of the 'Future of IBBY' discussions from previous congresses, was described by outgoing IBBY president Peter Schneck as 'free and open discussion on all matters related to IBBY, without the time constraints of the General Assembly'. He is a dreamer, of course. There is never enough time to say all one wants, hear all one wants, do all one wants. However, there was time to hear about IBBY projects to bring more books in African languages to African children, about workshops for IBBY sections that will be held at the next world congress, and to hear from nearly every country about their successes and how they feel that the central IBBY could be of help to them. Most of us longed for more time to discuss what we had just heard.

***For some, there simply is
not enough money to
publish books for children*** :

There is great diversity in the membership of national sections and in their needs. Money is a problem for many of the countries but in different ways. For some, there simply is not enough money to publish books for children. People do not have the funds to buy books and without customers, publishers cannot stay in business. For other countries, who publish many books of their own but would like more books from other countries, few books are imported because translated books do not make money for the

publishers and are thus not good business. Many, many sections have projects they would like to start to bring books to children – but need money to do so. Uhhmm – where did that Korean fellow go?

The book display gave hope, though. There we could see publications from many countries, the complete set of Honour books, the BIB Golden Apple illustration winners, twelve of Wolf Erlbruch's books and fourteen by Margaret Mahy. IBBY materials were available, including the special issue of *Bookbird* on Chinese children's literature and information about the next congress, to be held in Denmark in September 2008. Also hopeful was the warm feeling gained as friends from many countries gathered together with laughter and understanding. We could look at the large poster mounted on the wall of the convention centre, the one we had all signed and which bore the logo of the conference, a design of the symbol of Sixi, the 'god of happiness' in Chinese legend, and leave knowing this had been a happy time for us, and that we anticipated a successful future for IBBY.

1 The poem is available in picturebook format and on the web (<http://library.christchurch.org.nz/MargaretMahy/DownTheBackOfTheChair/>).

This book, creatively and exquisitely illustrated by IBBY prize-winner Krystyna Lipka-Sztarballo, tells a fairy tale with freshness, a warm sense of humour and subtle wisdom. In a forest clearing there appears a gorgeous egg, golden with silver flowers. All the birds and animals – magpie, ostrich, spider, boa, bees, crocodile and others – want to take care of it. In the end, the kangaroo brings the bickering to an end by dividing the caretaking duties among all those interested. But when an ugly chick hatches from the egg, the caretakers, with the exception of the kindly kangaroo, abandon him. The following day, hearing how beautifully the chick sings, the forest creatures regret their hasty, unkind abandonment.

The writer here demonstrates her knack for putting weighty issues into the context of imaginative fables accessible to young children.

Elzbieta Cichy



Liliana Bardjewska (illus Krystyna Lipka-Sztarballo)

MOJE – NIE MOJE [Mine – not mine]

Warsaw: Agencja Edytorska EZOP 2004

32pp ISBN 8389133113

(picturebook, 4+)



In Seventh Heaven

Seven Stories, the Centre for Children's Books

• Since it opened in 2005, Seven Stories, the
• Centre for Children's Books has become an
• exciting and innovative repository of British
• children's literature. Elizabeth Hammill tells
• of a dream realised

Once upon a time a dream was born on the banks of the Tyne. Not just any dream, but a dream that would lead to the creation of a national home for British children's literature.

Some fifteen years later, that dream came vibrantly to life when Seven Stories, the Centre for Children's Books, was officially opened in August 2005 by the Children's Laureate, Jacqueline Wilson, and her principal illustrator Nick Sharratt. It delighted public and media alike. 'Seven Stories,' enthused the *Guardian*, 'is a project of such originality that it makes you want to dance like a spindly-legged character drawn by Quentin Blake. It's not in London. It takes children's books seriously. It encourages children to read and to understand creativity.'

From dream to dance, the story begins in the late 1980s with the recognition of a startling gap in Britain's literary provision. British books for children have long been the envy of the world with their original artwork and manuscripts sought by collectors worldwide. Here, however, they have been sadly undervalued. Countries abroad have national centres dedicated to children's books, but until now no such institution has existed here.

As an American making my career here in the education and book worlds as a children's bookseller, lecturer and critic, I was surprised at the British reluctance to blow their own trumpet and celebrate their achievements in this field. Prompted by the near loss of the world

by ELIZABETH HAMMILL



Elizabeth Hammill is co-founder of Seven Stories; she worked initially as artistic director and is now collections director

***Countries abroad have
national centres dedicated
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tion has existed here [UK]*** :

famous Opie Collection to America, the realisation that important chunks of our children's literary heritage were disappearing abroad, and conversations with writers and illustrators lamenting the lack of a safe haven for their work in the UK, I wondered how this void could be filled. What would happen if a home for such work was created here – a home that could act as a kind of 'National Gallery of Children's Literature', complete with a collection, exhibitions and programmes? By 1994, having consulted widely with authors, illustrators and others in the children's book world, I had written a proposal for a centre whose vision is unchanged today.

***Imagine the potential that
this new national resource
... offers a centre to act as
a catalyst for literary
change and creativity*** :

Imagine such a centre for a minute. At its heart is a growing nationally important collection of books, artwork, manuscripts and other pre-publication materials by modern writers and illustrators. Imagine the possibilities that such a collection offers with its focus on documenting the creative process. Imagine it as a tool for learning and research. Imagine creating exhibitions, associated programmes (with artists and authors taking part), residencies, community projects and a website – all interpreting this original material in unconventional but meaningful ways to cultivate an appreciation of books and their artistic making, and a revaluation of the children's book

as an art form. Imagine the potential that this new national resource – enhanced by a model children's bookshop and a café serving book-inspired food – offers a centre to act as a catalyst for literary change and creativity! Isn't this a vision you'd feel compelled to pursue?

I was and I did, together with Mary Briggs, who joined me as co-developer in 1995. We had first worked together in the early 1980s as founder members of the Northern Children's Book Festival, now in its 23rd year. We shared a lifelong love of children's books and a belief in their value in nourishing children's intellectual, imaginative and creative growth. We brought complementary skills to the fledgling project – artistic planning, programming and good working relationships with authors, illustrators and publishers on my part and on Mary's, whose career spanned libraries, arts and education, skills in strategic and business management and public sector fundraising.

Clearly, Seven Stories didn't happen overnight. Eleven years have passed since we first opened a bank account for the centre and each put £10 in – eleven years since we first dreamed the dream *and* acted. If visions could be realised on goodwill alone, the centre would have been up and running long ago. But unlike Cinderella's dreams, our vision wasn't accomplished by the wave of a good fairy's wand – although we often longed for that to happen. Instead, it's been a roller coaster ride in the politics, economics and challenges of initiating a new cultural enterprise. The stories about our journey to opening are legion. Let me tell you one that captures the occasional moments of serendipity and unexpected connections that characterised the critical parts of our journey.

Let me tell you about the mill. Just back from my summer holidays in 2000, I was raced off to Byker in the east of Newcastle to look at Leatham's Mill in the Ouseburn Valley. Shaped by 19th-century manufacturing and industry, the



valley was developing a new life as one of the most creative places on Tyneside. Derelict warehouses were being converted into artist's studios, and people from the surrounding communities had set up a city farm, riding stables and a regeneration trust.

Since the Arts Lottery had announced its changed capital project plans in late 1999, we had had to abandon all ideas of a £10 million new build 'book palace', and had been looking for an existing building with character. Leetham's was shaped like an open book. Was this a sign? Inside, despite pigeon guano, access by ladder and no floor at the top, the building was wonderful. And it had a history. Derelict, it had been bought in the early eighties to be used as a retraining centre for redundant miners. Remnants from this period were still in evidence. One floor was full of literature, papers and film. A large portrait of Trotsky leant against

***• We had been looking for
• an existing building with
• character. Leetham's [mill]
• was shaped like an open
• book. Was this a sign?***

a wall. Downstairs was TUPS – Trade Union Printing Services – a publishing company run by an ex-miner and dedicated to publishing mining and local history. It felt right... We bought the mill and the crisp warehouse next door. Three years and £4.5 million later, conversion of the semi-derelict granary into a modern, family friendly gallery, performance and workshop space with a literary focus began.

Today, visitors are greeted by a building that dramatically marries weathered brick with polished concrete and glass outside, but retains the integrity and original cast iron structure, timber joists and beams of the old mill inside. Artwork by eight award-winning illustrators – Blake, Browne, Ray, Hutchins, Lawrence, Pieńkowski, Hughes and Kitamura – is etched onto the new entrance, shaped like an open book. It and the spiralling stair tower invite visitors to embark on a journey into the world of books and their makers – the journey starts with just one step!

***• Some people say there are
• only seven stories in the
• world but a thousand
• different ways of telling
• them. Seven Stories is
• about the thousand ways***

Inside, the nature of the journey is revealed in the Welcome Gallery: 'Some people say there are only seven stories in the world but a thousand different ways of telling them. Seven Stories is about the thousand ways.' And so it is. From the

***Activities, workshops,
conversations with authors
and illustrators and
exhibitions offer visitors of
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imagination*** :

beamed Artist's Attic on its seventh floor to the riverside Engine Room, Seven Stories is a kind of captivating literary playground where activities, workshops, conversations with authors and illustrators and exhibitions offer visitors of all ages an ever-changing landscape for the imagination – one that awakens them to the endless creative possibilities of playing with words and pictures and the ingredients of stories. Like Browser, the Seven Stories' cat, created by Satoshi Kitamura as a pictorial guide to the building, visitors can become writers, artists, explorers, designers, storytellers, readers and collectors here as they travel *by book*.

In the Robert Westall and Sebastian Walker galleries, the only exhibition spaces in the UK solely dedicated to children's books, a rolling programme of exhibitions is evolving. Manuscripts and illustrations – particularly, the words and pictures for children's books – have rarely found themselves in British galleries, framed and submitted to the public gaze as independent art objects. Here, however, original material from first doodles, scribbles or notes to finished illustrations and text are the stars of the shows.

Since 1998, our exhibition team has experimented with the creative and interpretative potential of such shows, mounting pilot exhibitions in borrowed venues in Newcastle and the region. To introduce what is often new, unfamiliar material to new 'apprentice' audiences, we have developed a reputation for finding ingenious, untried, sometimes off-beat approaches to



exhibition design. Thinking about old literary friends in new critical ways has opened up surprising storylines – creating exhibitions is like creating a picturebook, we've discovered – and enabled us to transform galleries into stages where an ongoing 'dialogue' between the work on show, writers, illustrators and their audiences can take place.

Working with Foundation Arts students from Newcastle College, we developed a theatrical framework for our first exhibition – 'Daft as a Bucket', a Colin McNaughton retrospective, with roughs, character sketches and other artwork mounted on sets, bringing scenes from Colin's books to life with speech bubble labels where Colin spoke directly to his audience. Since then, we have continued to demonstrate that inventive exhibitions about children's books and the art of their makers can not only connect us to books, but also, as the *Times Educational Supplement*

(TES) once wrote, take us on ‘the sort of grand tour that might make sparks fly out of the brain’.

Our opening exhibitions have invited visitors to embark on just such tours. ‘Incredible Journeys’ whisked us away into a galaxy of possible story worlds – each one designed by a different artist. As we moved from the dramatic Word World through the theatrical dressing room of the Character World to the delights of the Time World and the upside-down room in the Topsy Turvey World, we were introduced to sketches, notes, letters, manuscripts and finished artwork by a veritable ‘who’s who’ of children’s writers and illustrators from the past 70 years. ‘What’s in the book?’ immersed us in the more domestic but richly inventive creative world of Janet and Allan Ahlberg.

Incredible Journeys asked us to consider questions like, what happens when we read? when we say that we are lost in a book, where are we and how did we get there? and to examine how different writers and illustrators from JK Rowling, Philippa Pearce, Lucy Boston and David Almond to Helen Oxenbury, Diana Stanley and Angela Barrett play with those key ingredients of storytelling – words, character, place and time – to create their work. What’s in the book? involved us in an exploration of how the Ahlbergs – a unique artistic partnership – made or, as Allan puts it, ‘played tennis’ with their books. Westall’s Kingdom, drawn from the literary archive of the late writer Robert Westall, first offered to us in 1995, opened in October 2006 and inaugurated the Westall Gallery as a showcase for our growing collection.

Where you may ask is the collection? Not in the mill but housed at Newcastle University and a second site nearby. The creation of a Collection Centre with research facilities is our next project – already underway. In the meantime, Seven Stories’ heart – the growing manuscript and artwork collection of the original vision – is already in the making. Currently 23 authors, including Peter Dickinson, Jan Mark, Eva Ibbotson, Philip Pullman, Michael Rosen and Ursula Moray Williams are represented and 25 illustrators, including Faith Jaques, Harold Jones, Edward Ardizzone, Shirley Hughes, Pat and Lawrence Hutchins and Michael Foreman. We also hold the Kaye Webb archive and several significant book collections. Much more is pledged.

Thinking about old literary friends in new critical ways has opened up surprising storylines – creating exhibitions is like creating a picturebook, we’ve discovered



There is a growing sense that the North East is becoming a new and exiting axis for children's literature nationally :

Since the first ideas for Seven Stories were developed all those years ago, the profile of children's literature has changed. We have been part of a movement that has seen children's books make headline news with the works of JK Rowling, Philip Pullman and Jacqueline Wilson and the creation of the post of Children's Laureate. Now,

following our opening year, there is a growing sense that the North East is becoming a new and exiting axis for children's literature nationally. The creation of a chair and reader in children's literature at Newcastle University signalled this and our developing partnership with the university confirms it.

'Children's books find their place on the shelf of history,' the *Financial Times* wrote in August 2005. 'Great name, great building, great location, great idea,' enthused David Lloyd, managing director of Walker Books, 'It's an inspirational project ... Its celebration of children's books is already important and original, and the possibilities are endless for what it can do in the future.' For a reviewer from the *Museums Journal*, Seven Stories is simply 'seventh heaven'. As for me, well, I'm tempted to dance...



Explorer

Featured in a series popular in Norway and abroad is Markus Simonsen, age 13, known to classmates as Wormster. Markus is a loner who is also unusually reflective and precocious for his age. Extremely shy in person, Markus expresses himself by writing exaggerated and fanciful fanmail to famous people. As a result of his creative literary efforts, he manages to stumble into and out of a meeting with a TV actress, emerging wiser, more worldly and with newfound confidence.

Well-developed characters and humour with a satirical tang remind the smiling reader of Sue Townsend's *SECRET DIARY OF ADRIAN MOLE AGED 13¾* (UK, Harper 2003). Both books are characterised by remarkably distinctive, authentic-sounding teen voices. A sensitive coming of age tale laced liberally with humour.

Glenna Sloan



KLAUS HAGERUP (trans TARA CHACE)

MARKUS OG DIANA [Markus and Diana]

Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mills Press/Front Street
(first USA edn) 2006

188pp ISBN 1932425594
(fiction, 12+)

A Cherished Dream

Russia's National Children's Book Prize

• *In this article, Vadim Vasiliev outlines the move to revitalise children's literature in Russia with the establishment of a national children's book prize. The Cherished Dream prize has attracted widespread interest, receiving thousands of submissions in its first year*

Russia's national children's book prize, the *Zavetnaya mechta* (Cherished Dream) award, was launched in August 2005 by a foundation bearing the same name. The Cherished Dream Foundation was established by MIAN, a leading group of companies in the Russian real estate market, to co-ordinate the group's charitable activities. The foundation arranges targeted social assistance to support orphaned children and children from lower-income families, as well as launching cultural and literary projects aimed at the rising generation. The biggest of these projects is *Zavetnaya mechta*, the Cherished Dream prize.

The main goals set by the founders of the Cherished Dream prize are to breathe new life into children's literature created in the Russian language, to identify new talent, to introduce new authors and to boost the creativity of well-known authors writing for children and teenagers.

The Cherished Dream award has become the most open and democratic of the Russian children's book prizes. The only condition which is a must for all the applicants is that they should know how to write books for children. There are no taboos, no restrictions as to the place of residence, age, nationality of the author, or the genre or size of the works concerned. One can submit a novel, a novella, a short story, a book of stories or a translation of one's own work initially created in some language other than Russian. Both newly written pieces and published books are accepted by the jury. This is the main idea of the prize: any talented author has a chance to win an award. Any author writing in the Russian language for children and teenagers can submit work to this contest and it does not matter whether the author is just a beginner or already well known. Moreover, works can be submitted not only by the authors themselves but also by all kinds of professional associations and communities as well as publishers, literary critics, book reviewers and literary agents.

Apart from the first-grade prize awarded to the authors of the top three novels or collections of stories and the second-grade prize, which can be awarded to six authors (generally for a narrative or story), there is a variety of additional nominations awarded; for

by VADIM VASILIEV



Vadim Vasiliev is head of the Cherished Dream award project

The list of finalists drawn up by the literary council was handed over to the jury members to select the winners in all categories by secret ballot. Apart from well-known persons administrating various cultural projects and publishers, there were also two schoolchildren among the members of the jury – Victoria Myzgina from Yekaterinburg and Dmitri Zhikharevich from Pskov – who were awarded numerous reader’s prizes and were elected as the most active readers of the children’s reading clubs in their cities. The chairman of the jury was Eduard Uspensky, one of the most popular Russian authors for children.

The winners were announced on 23 May 2006 at a solemn award ceremony. The winner of the top prize was Fred Adra of Israel for his novel *Lis Uliss*.

Prizewinners

First-grade prizes

- Fred Adra (Israel) for his fairy novel about animals *Lis Uliss* [Ulysses, the fox]
- Boris Minaev for his collection of stories *Detstvo Lyovy* [Lyova’s childhood]
- Andrey Kofman for his novel *Tierra Adelante*

Second-grade prizes

- Ekaterina Murashova for her story ‘Klass korrektsii’ [Remedial class] from the book *Perehodnyy vozrast* [Awkward age]
- Vladimir Polyakov for his series of stories *Olukh tsarya nebesnogo* [Good God’s dullard]
- Victor Serov for his series of stories *Iz zhizni o. Mikhaila* [Stories from father Mikhail’s life]
- Akhat Mushinsky for his stories *Anas-ananas i drugie* [Anas-ananas and the others]
- Natalia Menzhunova for her story ‘Lozhkarevka-international i eyo obitateli’ [Lozhkarevka-international and its dwellers]
- Nikolai Nazarkin (the Netherlands) for his book of stories *Izumrudnaya rybka* [Emerald fish]

Additional prizes

Literary debut

- Natalia Uspenskaya and Kristina Uspenskaya for their story ‘Igrushki dlya vzroslykh’ [Toys for the grown-ups]

Humour

- Andrey Zhvarevsky and Igor Myt’ko for their novel *Zdes’ vam ne prichinyat nikakogo vreda* [You are not going to be harmed here]

Realistic writing for young people about their lives and relations with the adult world

- Tamara Sharkova for her series of stories *Iz veka v vek* [Throughout the centuries]

Writing about animals or wildlife

- Stanislav Olefir for his stories *My zhivem na Severe* [We live in the north]

Science fiction/fantasy

- Yulia Bol’shakova (Canada) for her novel *Esmeral’da na Pangalee* [Esmeralda on Pangaley]

Detective story

- Arthur Agatov for his novel *Zagadka nefritovoy laguny – Krymsky roman* [The mystery of the jade lagoon – a crime novel]

Most of the books submitted for the competition had a 'fairy plot' and 'we encountered quite a lot of remakes of Harry Potter' This type of writing was rejected by the jury due to its 'obvious secondariness'

In the words of Marina Moskvina, a famous children's writer and a member of the jury:

We were a great deal surprised and very happy to discover that children's literature in the Russian language still exists and is making considerable progress. We are in receipt of quite a number of really well-written works in a whole variety of genres. We were glad to see original, witty and exciting styles and current themes arising in these works. The authors tend to teach their readers to love people and animals, and to be kind-hearted.

While offering his comments, Mikhail Butov, head of the literary council, stressed that most of the books submitted for the competition had a 'fairy plot' and 'we encountered quite a lot of remakes of Harry Potter'. This type of writing was rejected by the jury due to its 'obvious secondariness'. He admitted that the works submitted by younger authors lacked skill and originality, and that they strongly resembled typical school compositions. Among the works submitted for the prize for most humorous writing, he found that there were only a few which proved to be really funny. However, for the nomination of best detective story they received a good number of really fine works. By far the biggest number of entries submitted were for the nomination of best science fiction/fantasy writing.

In selecting the best writings, Mr Butov explained the three main criteria used by the experts:

To begin with, the work should be entertaining, which is quite essential for children. A grown-up reader can accept lack of suspense and get through a sluggish book, but a child in this case would rather go and play a computer game or watch TV. Secondly, the books for children, though they can be ironic, sarcastic and raise quite sensitive matters, should definitely have standards of integrity and morality. So the author's approach to the events described is quite important. And thirdly we must say something about originality. For example, we received a good number of works submitted for the nomination of best writing on animals/wildlife; however, while reading these the experts on the literary council were under the strong impression that they were reading one and the same endless book, familiar since early childhood. This does not mean that this theme is no longer relevant. We highly doubt that a certain theme can be completely exhausted. The problem here is to find an unusual view and to make the story interesting. This is how creative works are. And it was writings of this bright and well-made kind that were selected for the final. Some well-made pieces were rejected, as their authors seem to be too attached to naturalism, writing in a cruel way or introducing steamy love scenes. Most of such writings were rejected for reasons of morality and ethics.

Initially, the organisers had no plans to provide funds for publishing the top books. They treated their task as just discovering worthwhile new books for children and introducing their authors to the literary community.

However, in order to help the works reach the reader, which is the main goal of the project, the books have to be published. So for the sake of promoting and publishing the works of the prize-winners, the Cherished Dream Foundation announced a series of grants to publishers, assigning for this purpose RUB 810,000 (US \$30,000).

In Russia we say that there is no better present than a book. Indeed, books lead us into new worlds, inspire dreams and make us smile, save us from loneliness, give us examples to follow, answer the eternal questions and unify different generations. We are sad to admit that at the moment Russian children's literature is having a hard time. A nation that used to be considered as 'the most reading' has now raised a generation which is absolutely uninterested in reading.

On the one hand, you will no longer find any new interesting books for children in the bookshops. Besides, our younger generation is attracted mostly to TV and computer games, fast driving and shooting straight. So we can say that nowadays Russian children find themselves in a kind of intellectual and spiritual vacuum and that the only refuge they have is TV, computer games and popular fantasy books translated from other languages.

Russian children's literature is having a hard time. A nation that used to be considered as 'the most reading' has now raised a generation which is absolutely uninterested in reading

We do not claim that the Cherished Dream prize is going to be able to address such tremendous things as the world of computers and TV. To be frank, this is not what the prize is about. Our goal is just to give a choice, to offer our children new books of high quality.

In his comments on the results of the first year of the award, Eduard Uspensky, chairman of the jury, stated that 'We should not get upset because this year we did not find a dazzling bestseller, a genius book which would explode on to the market. I am sure that we are going to find such a book during the next years. The essential thing is that the prize was launched.' The award is now well into its second year.

Writings for children in the Russian language only may be submitted to the following address:

123022 Moscow
Krasnaja Presnja str., 22
Zavetnaya mechta
RUSSIA

The closing date is late February 2007. The results will be announced in May.

Books on Books

edited and compiled by

BARBARA SCHARIOTH

(translations by Nikola von Merveldt)



Barbara Scharioth is director of the
Internationale Jugendbibliothek
(International Youth Library) in Munich



- *A book about the illustrator Walter Trier and*
- *one by the illustrator Istvan Schritter; a*
- *tribute to the Danish scholar Torben Weinreich;*
- *books on mediating history from Germany*
- *and the Netherlands; one on teaching the joy*
- *of reading from France; a critical analysis of*
- *Diana Wynne Jones; half a century of*
- *Hungarian children's literature; and the*
- *Brothers Grimm in Japan*

ARGENTINA

ISTVAN SCHRITTER

La otra lectura. La ilustración en los libros para niños

[The other way of reading. Illustration in children's books]

(Series: Literatura infantil, Relecturas)

Buenos Aires: Lugar Editorial [et al.] 2005 xxiii + 260pp ISBN 9508922370 €16.00

In recent years, the renowned Argentinean children's books illustrator Istvan Schritter, born in 1968, has helped shape the discourse of children's book illustration in his country. *La otra lectura* assembles a selection of his articles and lectures, including interviews with colleagues and other advocates of children's book illustration.

The book is divided into four sections: the first focuses on the specific challenges and characteristics of illustrating for children; the second part looks at the reception of illustrations, at how images are 'read'; the third section describes didactic aspects of working with picturebooks; and in the last part, Schritter critically assesses the situation of children's literature illustration and the working condition of illustrators in Argentina.

This is an important book and a recommendable read, especially since literature on the South American situation is still scarce. It is first and foremost addressed to teachers, librarians and people working in reading promotion projects. Schritter has a gift for explaining fundamental facts with great clarity; his lucid style makes this book a useful reference tool for the daily work with children and books.

Jochen Weber

DENMARK

NINA CHRISTENSEN AND ANNA LARLSKOV SKYGGEBERG (EDS)

På opdagelse i børnelitteraturen. Festschrift til Torben Weinreich

[Exploring children's literature. Festschrift for Torben Weinreich]

København: Høst 2006 213pp ISBN 8763802813 DEK 249.00



This *festschrift* for Torben Weinreich opens with a review of Danish children's literature scholarship. Until well into the 1970s, research in the field was only conducted by a handful of enthusiasts. It was not until 1998, when Weinreich founded the Center for Børnelitteratur,

that it was institutionalised and gained wider recognition. But since children's literature remains a marginalised field of study, international collaboration is of great importance. This is reflected in the list of contributors, including scholars of international renown such as Harald Bache-Wiig, Hans-Heino Ewers, Peter Hunt, Maria Nikolajeva and Jean Perrot.

The contributions focus on four topics: the specifics, the canon, the history of children's literature, and the reading habits of children and young adults. The essays in the first section remain fairly general; two contributions in the canon section analyse HC Andersen's work and its reception; Harald Bache-Wiig adds a historical dimension by retracing the interconnectedness of Norwegian children's literature with other narrative traditions; and Anette Øster presents the results of her extensive fieldwork on children's reading habits in Denmark. The volume closes with an analysis of Weinreich's young adult novel *Elsker dig* (Love thyself, 2004), in which the author paints a portrait of the 1950s reflecting his own experiences.

Andreas Bode

FRANCE

ROLANDE CAUSSE

Qui lit petit lit toute la vie. Comment donner le goût de lire aux enfants de la naissance à l'adolescence: Suivi de la bibliothèque idéale de vos enfants

[Early readers, eternal readers. How to teach children the joy of reading from birth to adolescence:

Followed by your children's ideal library]

(Series: Questions de parents)

Paris: Albin Michel 2005 345pp ISBN 2226155503 €17.00



Reading is a powerful cultural technique: it enriches our language, sparks our imagination, helps structure our thoughts, and gives us access to knowledge. These are some of the reasons why reading remains important in our modern multi-

media environment. The author helps parents, teachers and educators who are complaining about children's declining interest in reading with valuable background information and helpful suggestions. She begins with the effect of storytelling on infants and toddlers, treats the various ways in which children can interact with picture-books, poems, and art and music books, and finally describes how children and adolescents become independent readers.

Text boxes with summaries, comments or tips facilitate the orientation in this user-friendly book. Along with information on a controlled access to electronic media the author also shows how comics, non-fiction books, and audio-books can help turn around even the most reluctant of readers. Many books named in the text and a list of useful books compiled with the help of a children's librarian at the end of the book help to effectively translate the information of this highly experienced author into practice.

Elena Kilian

GERMANY

GABRIELE VON GLASENAPP AND

GISELA WILKENDING (EDS)

Geschichte und Geschichten. Die Kinder- und Jugendliteratur und das kulturelle und politische Gedächtnis

[History and stories. Children's literature and the cultural and political memory]

(Series: Kinder- und Jugendkultur, -literatur und -medien 41)

Frankfurt am Main [et al.]: Lang 2005 328pp ISBN

3631538316 €49.80

This collection of fifteen essays by scholars from different German universities and from three neighbouring countries is volume 41 of an extensive series on children's and young adult culture, literature, and audiovisual media. These conference proceedings of a 2004 colloquium organised by the renowned 'Society for German scholarship in children's and young adult literature' present a new perspective on an 'old' topic of children's literature – the transmission of historical knowledge.

Gabriele von Glasenapp traces the changing functions of historical storytelling for young readers in her opening contribution, whose title is a quote from the well-known German-Jewish author of historical novels, Alfred Döblin. A number of articles are dedicated to texts about National Socialism and the Holocaust. Hans-Heino Ewers explores the writings of authors from the war and postwar generation in two essays. In the first, his analysis of Peter Härtling's work illustrates how historical texts for young readers can function as a medium that allows writers to confront, interpret and appropriate history in their own individual way. In the second, he discusses a dual memorial approach in recent narrative texts about the German past that merge individual, biographical memories with an exploration of historical facts.

To give one last example, in ‘Learning History through Stories?’, Irit Wyrobinik demonstrates the interest of schoolchildren (9 years and older) in history and highlights the contribution story-telling can make to encourage this interest – not just as an exercise in names, dates and events but as an appealing introduction to historical thinking.

Barbara Scharioth

HUNGARY

GABRIELLA KOMÁROMI

Elfejtett irodalom. Fejezetek a magyar gyermek- és ifjúsági próza történetéből: 1900–1944

[Forgotten literature. Studies in the history of Hungarian children’s and young adult literature: 1900–1944]

Budapest: Móra 2005 364pp ISBN 9631180069 HUF 2290.00 (c €10.00)

This monograph gives a substantiated overview of Hungarian children’s and young adult literature from the first half of the 20th century. It focuses on a large number of mostly forgotten books that were published alongside the still popular classics. Gabriella Komáromi, professor at Kaposvár University, presents them within the changing historical and social contexts and offers new insights into this literature, which is still little known outside of Hungary.

The author analyses the corpus with tools from philology, reader-response theory, and sociology of reading. She looks at periodicals for children, historical novels and hitherto neglected novels for girls, and traces the reception of children’s literature as well as its interaction with literary styles such as art deco and symbolism. This survey of Hungarian children’s literature from the beginning of the last century until the

end of World War II fills a blank in Hungarian literary history. Scholars, teachers, librarians and editors will appreciate this study as a valuable guide to a literature well worth discovering.

Doris Amberg

JAPAN

YŌKO NAGURA

Nihon no kindaika to Gurimu dōwa. Jidai ni yoru henka o yomitoku

[Japan’s modernisation and the Brothers Grimm’s Fairy Tales – their transformations across the ages]

Kyōto: Sekai Shisō-sha 2005 294pp ISBN 4790711218 ¥2,300

Grimm’s Fairy Tales are the most famous exponents of German children’s literature in Japan. During Japan’s modernisation they were integrated into the school syllabus as part of the education reforms, which advocated the Herbartian teaching method. They also served linguistic reform by setting an example for standardised Japanese language, which was to bridge the gap between spoken and written communication. Moreover, published in children’s and women’s magazines, they were thought to educate and entertain. The history of the reception of the fairy tales in Japan is long and unique.

The author, professor at Kyoto University of Education, traces the role of the Brothers Grimm’s Fairy Tales from the Meiji-, and the Taisho- until the early Showa-Era (1868–1945) and analyses the various shifts in content, language and illustration. The variations of the Japanese translations and adaptations reflect both the developments of Japanese history and the individual personalities of their creators. The last chapters of this fascinating and thorough study focus on the reception of ‘Little Red Riding

Hood' and of the tale 'The Jew in the Thorn Bush', which strongly influenced the Japanese stereotype of the Jews.

Beyond its interest for the history of education, this book also offers a substantial study of comparative cultural history.

Fumiko Ganzenmüller

NETHERLANDS

PIET MOOREN AND HELMA VAN
LIEROP (EDS)

***De Tweede Wereldoorlog als moreel ijkpunt:
Opvoeding, jeugdliteratuur en beeldvorming***

[The Second World War as moral reference
point: education, children's literature and images]

Leidschendam: Biblion 2005 214pp ISBN 9054836733 €32.50

In 2005, the theme of the annual conference on children's literature at the University of Tilburg (The Netherlands) was the representation of the Second World War (1939–1945) in modern media for children. Although WWII ended 60 years ago, it remains an important topic in books and movies for children.

The fifteen contributions to this volume offer different perspectives on this phenomenon. They show that authors like Theo Engelen, Rita Törnqvist and Mirjam Pressler and illustrator Ceseli Josephus Jitta prefer a realistic approach and draw on their own experiences of the war in their portrayal of events. Inspired by personal memories, these books tend towards a more lyrical tone and set themselves off against the mass of publications that merely use the war as a backdrop for adventure stories.

Only the first category will give children a good idea of what it meant to be a child in the years between 1939 and 1945. Contributors agreed that representations of the war should be

as historically accurate as possible and that there ought to be no change or manipulation whatsoever of these historical facts – not even for artistic reasons. This condition also applies to books dealing with more recent conflicts in the world, as Katrien Seynaeve shows in her contribution about children's books dealing with the Arab-Israeli conflict. In his contribution, Hans-Heino Ewers refers to children's literature as 'mediator in the intergenerational dialogue'.

The conference proceedings are in Dutch, except for the contribution of Hans-Heino Ewers, which is translated into English.

Toin Duijx

SWITZERLAND

ANTJE NEUNER-WARTHORST (ED)

***Walter Trier – Politik, Kunst, Reklame.
Ausstellungskatalog der Trier-Retrospektive
im Wilhelm-Busch-Museum in Hannover
als Buchausgabe***

[Walter Trier – Politics, Art, Advert. Book
edition of the exhibition catalogue of the Trier
retrospective at the Wilhelm-Busch-Museum,
Hannover]

Affoltern am Albis: Atrium Zürich 2006 236pp ISBN
3855359938 €39.00



Following a number of dispersed publications of varying informative value about Walter Trier, this book version of an exhibition catalogue finally offers a comprehensive description and analysis of his life's work and pays tribute to this internationally renowned artist. The two sections 'Walter Trier

for children' and 'Walter Trier for adults' encompass his complete oeuvre: his illustrations of children's books, his political and social caricatures, his advertising art (especially cover designs for books and periodicals) and, last but not least, the composition of his toy collection.

In the section on children's books illustration, Trier's collaboration with Erich Kästner plays a prominent role. Trier illustrated twelve of Kästner's books, including his six 'novels for children', which are presented in detailed art historical analyses. When the success of *Emil and the Detectives* is attributed mainly to the illustrations (p. 17), however, the author's art historical perspective does not do justice to Kästner's contribution to this collaborative effort. Less space is accorded to Trier's picturebook illustrations of his own or of foreign texts, including books in English published after his emigration from Germany, such as *Dandy the Donkey* (1943). The originals of his colourful illustrations to Kästner's retelling of famous German chapbook tales, which are part of the collection of the International Youth Library in Munich, were also featured in the exhibition.

One would have liked to learn more about his most extensive work of illustration, the picturebook 'The animals' conference', which is not only a classic of peace literature but also a document of Trier's collaboration with Erich Kästner and Jella Lepman, the founder of the International Youth Library and of IBBY. Overall, however, this thoroughly researched and well-presented publication is exemplary, and one can hope that it will inspire similar ventures, for many an important illustrator's work is still awaiting due appraisal.

Andreas Bode

USA

FARAH MENDLESOHN

Diana Wynne Jones: Children's Literature and the Fantastic Tradition

(Series: Children's Literature and Culture 36)

New York: Routledge 2005 xxxiii + 240pp ISBN 0415970237

€84.50



In this comprehensive study of one of the most popular British fantasy authors, Farah Mendlesohn sets out to show that Diana Wynne Jones's complex and sophisticatedly structured books should not merely be read as entertaining fantasy fiction but, at the same time, serve as 'metafictional critical response to the fantastic'. Therefore, they have exerted great influence on her fellow authors and on the way in which the fantasy genre has developed during the past 30 years. As Mendlesohn states in her introduction, the main focus of her book is 'not so much [on] what Jones writes about, or for whom she writes, but *how* she writes about it'.

Offering various groupings of Jones's texts instead of analysing the series of books separately, Mendlesohn looks at certain aspects of her work, such as the relationship between magic and empowerment and the protagonist's acquisition of agency (Chapter 2), or Jones's approach to time travel (Chapter 3). In Chapters 4–6, she assigns Jones's books to different types of fantasies – portal-quest fantasies, immersed fantasies, and liminal fantasies – to consider the rhetorical strategies that the author uses to construct her worlds. The final chapter is 'most directly concerned with Jones as a producer of metafiction' and stresses the importance of language and storytelling in her work.

This thoroughly researched critical study provides new insights into the extensive work of Diana Wynne Jones and will be a delightful and worthwhile read for both academics and fantasy aficionados.

Claudia Söffner

Focus IBBY

INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S BOOK DAY

2 APRIL 2007

TE RĀ WHAKANUI PUKAPIKA
MĀ TE TAMARIKI O TE AO

JOURNÉE INTERNATIONALE
DU LIVRE POUR ENFANTS

INTERNATIONALER
KINDERBUCHTAG

DIA INTERNACIONAL
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STORIES ^{RING} THE WORLD

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INTERNATIONAL BOARD ON BOOKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



compiled and edited by

ELIZABETH PAGE



Elizabeth Page is IBBY's
member services, communications
and new projects director

- *A message and a poster from New Zealand*
- *for International Children's Book Day; a*
- *report on the congress in Macau, China; a*
- *sad farewell to a dear IBBY friend; a new*
- *Executive Committee for IBBY*

Message for International Children's Book Day 2007

I will never forget learning to read. Back when I was really small, words scurried past my eyes like little black beetles trying to get away from me. But I was too clever for them. I learned to recognise them no matter how fast they ran. And at last – at last I was able to open books and understand what was written there. I was able to read stories and jokes and poems all by myself.

Mind you, there were some surprises. Reading gave me power over stories, but, in a way, it also gave stories power over me. I have never been able to get away from them. That is part of the mystery of reading.

You open the book, take in the words and the good story explodes inside you. Those black beetles running in straight lines across the white page, turn first into words you can understand and then into magical images and events. Though certain stories seem to have nothing to do with real life ... though they melt into surprises of all kinds, and stretch possibility this way and that as if it were a rubber band, in the end good stories bring us back to ourselves. They are made up of *words*, and all human beings are anxious to have adventures with words.

Most of us begin as listeners. When we are babies our mothers and fathers play with us, reciting rhymes, touching our toes (This little pig went to market) or clapping our hands (Pat-a-cake! Pat-a-cake). Games with words are spoken aloud and, as very small children, we listen and laugh at them. Later, we learn to read

that black print on the flat page, and, even when we read in silence, a certain voice is there too. Whose voice is it? It might be your own voice – the reader's voice, but it is more than that. It is the voice of story, speaking from inside the reader's head.

Of course there are many ways in which stories are told these days. Films and television have tales to tell, but they do not use language in the way books do. Authors who work on television or film scripts are often told to cut back on the words. 'Let the pictures tell the story,' say the experts. We watch television with other people, but when we read we mostly read alone.

We live in a time when the world is crowded with books. It is part of the reader's journey to search through them by reading and then reading again. It is part of the reader's adventure to find in that wild jungle of print, some story that will leap up like a magician ... some story that is so exciting and mysterious that the reader is changed by it. I think every reader lives for the moment when the everyday world shifts a little, giving way to some new joke, some new idea, some new possibility given a truth of its own by the power of words. 'Yes, that is true!' cries that voice inside us. 'I recognise you!' Isn't reading exciting!

Margaret Mahy

The 2007 message and poster have been sponsored by IBBY New Zealand. The 2006 Hans Christian Andersen Award winner Margaret Mahy wrote the message addressed to the children of the world. Auckland author/illustrator Zac Waipara designed the stunning poster with the theme 'Stories Ring the World'.

The message, available in five languages – English, French, German, Maori and Spanish – and poster are available from IBBY New Zealand. Visit www.storylines.org.nz for more information about how to order copies and about events celebrating ICBY 2007.

IBBY Congress in China



Ribbon cutting ceremony to open the 30th IBBY congress

The 30th IBBY congress took place at the Fisherman's Wharf Convention Centre, Macau, on 21, 22 and 23 September 2006. Despite the late change of venue from Beijing to Macau, around 500 participants from 54 countries attended. During these three packed days representatives from 45 national sections met old friends, made new ones, talked, discussed and generally

strengthened their commitment to IBBY. The congress opened with three plenary session lectures starting with Brian Wafawarowa from South Africa who spoke about the opportunities and problems of publishing and the distribution of books for children in Africa; Kang Woo-Hyon of the Republic of Korea made a wonderful visual presentation of the international children's festival on Nami Island; and Qin Wenjun talked about children's literature as the light that illuminates the world.

After this elevated beginning, the festive opening ceremony began with the traditional Chinese ribbon cutting ceremony. Peter Schneck together with Ho Hau Wah the chief executive of the Macau Special Administrative Region and other dignitaries cut the ribbon and officially opened the congress to the accompaniment of Chinese lions.

Peter Schneck in his opening speech talked about the difficult situation faced by children all over the world:

Like Jella Lepman in her time, today we are sadly aware that in our world – war-torn and shaken by natural disasters – there is still neither sufficient international understanding nor equal access to the rights and privileges of the world's wealth; we also know that the burdens of poverty, insecurity, underdevelopment and illiteracy are not the same for all of us. The aim to give all children of the world access to books with high literary and artistic standards is not fulfilled even in the most developed and prosperous regions of the world. Children have the right to claim peace and personal assurance for themselves and their families. They have a right to claim physical and intellectual nutrition. To increase literacy we need books for children that are available in homes, in schools, libraries and bookshops; we also need a regionally based independent system of publishing and we need well-trained parents, teachers, librarians and scholars. ...Let us work together to ensure that there will be books of high quality that are accessible to all the children of the world.



The morning continued with an overview of the IBBY Honour List 2006. The 2006 selection includes a record of 164 titles from 57 national

sections in 45 different languages: truly a global selection. Fourteen of the nominees travelled to Macau to receive their diplomas in person, and Evangeline Ledi Barongo, an author from Uganda, thanked IBBY on behalf of all the nominees.

The afternoon was full of children! For the first time at an IBBY congress, a children's forum took place with speakers from India and the USA joining young people from all regions of China. The forum had the title 'Literature of Ours', and it gave a fascinating insight into the reading habits of young people, their aspirations and their love of hearing and telling stories. Lam Tong and the Tung Cheng Yuen Buddhist Association supported the event. Lam Tong was born in Putian, Fujian nearly 80 years ago. He was homeless and had a miserable life for years. However, he prospered and regained his health and in gratitude founded the Buddhist Association. Since that time he has worked hard to help the next generation and undertakes public welfare. Seventeen young people took part, some as young as 9 years old, showing us that the future of children's literature is in safe hands.

The highlight of the opening evening was the celebration of the 2006 Hans Christian Andersen Awards. Huang Jianbin opened the evening by introducing Jeffrey Garrett, the Andersen Award Jury President. In delivering his *laudatio*, Jeffrey warmly thanked the Nissan Motor Company for continuing to sponsor the award. Simon Sproule the corporate vice president of Nissan sent a message that was read by Chieko Suemori, in which he stated that Nissan is involved in activities to help more children enjoy reading books because they

believe that giving children access to quality books and the chance to venture into the wonderful world of the imagination is a very precious experience for children to have. When you read a good book, it is an encounter with a worldview that is different from your own, with a world you

never knew existed. Reading encourages curiosity, creativity and even sensitivity and concern for others. We [Nissan] are delighted if our support of this award can help make even the smallest contribution to the dreams, imaginations and well-rounded growth of our precious children.

Jeffrey Garrett went on to thank the 2006 Andersen jury for their amazing work in which the 51 candidates from 28 different countries were represented not only by their books, but also by extensive dossiers and unpublished translations prepared by their nominating IBBY sections. The 2006 winners were selected after lengthy electronic discussions and an even lengthier two-day meeting in Fiesole, Italy. The 2006 winners were introduced and praised:

It is always stimulating and revealing to take two artists of greatness and compare them, defining each in terms of their differences with the other, and also finding their unexpected similarities. This can be done independently of medium, I believe, for after all, text and illustration are both vehicles of the imagination, both languages of the mind and of the heart. In the case of our winners this year, the commonalities far outweigh the differences, for both firmly believe that there is a reality, which transcends our everyday and banal world.

In his praise of Wolf Erlbruch, Jeffrey Garrett said that

in his entire oeuvre, Erlbruch seems determined to show that nothing is trivial, nothing is as the grown-ups insist that it is, not even counting to ten, not even walking through a dark city street, but that everything resonates with associations, ghosts, possibilities.... content and form play equally compelling roles in the work of this master. This year's Andersen Medal for



Illustration is indeed a recognition of one of the great innovators and experimenters of the illustrator's art. Wolf Erlbruch masters an array of artistic registers, is as at home citing and combining artistic styles of the 19th and 20th centuries as he is inventing new ways to reach out to children of all ages.

Wolf Erlbruch was not able to attend the congress but sent a short CD-ROM, in which, he thanked IBBY and the jury for his selection, and a brief vignette of him working with a shadow puppet entertained the participants.

Talking about Margaret Mahy, Jeffrey Garrett said,

What Margaret Mahy's writing does for children is to confirm them in a sense of the sacredness of themselves; the higher sense of nonsense; the poetry of their lives.

We were honoured that she was present and addressed the congress in her own exuberant way, by telling a story in rhyme about just what extraordinary things can be found down the back of the chair!

The celebration of the IBBY-Asahi Reading Promotion Awards for 2006 was accompanied by a visual presentation by Irena Kozminska of the winning Polish project: Foundation ABCXXI: All of Poland Reads to Kids and an energetic presentation by winner Dashdondog Jambyn, director of the Mongolian Children's Mobile Library Project. Jant van der Weg, 2006 jury president, said that she and the jury were

thrilled with the Mongolian project, particularly with the way the books are transported to children in very remote areas of the country – reaching children that would not usually see any books if it was not for this project. The books are transported with the help of camels, an exotic animal for children who do not have them in their own country! Here the magic begins. The project in Mongolia reaches children in remote areas and lets them discover the magic of books, which in turn encourages cultural development. The Polish project is also a fascinating project. It involves reading promotion activities that are very well planned and take place all over the country. Modern media have been integrated at a high level and used to support the main aim of the project: to revitalise the habit of reading to children in different situations, thus not only raising the mental level of young children, but also strengthening moral values.



The IBBY open forum consisted of short presentations by 28 national sections about their work, successes, challenges and problems. One of the most inspiring presentations was by Kang Woo-Hyon, president of IBBY

Korea, who urged other members to look further than the problems of funding and just go for it: sponsorship would follow visionary planning and enthusiasm!

The congress days were filled with thought-provoking talks, in-depth presentations and storytelling sessions. The international Bookstart conference was held on the final day, organised by colleagues from Colombia, Japan, Taiwan, Thailand and the UK.

The festive closing ceremony, held at the Wynn Restaurant in Macau, was a perfect occasion to present IBBY Honorary membership to Somboon Singkamanen of Thailand and Jella Lepman medals to Hideo Yamada of Japan and Vincent Frank-Steiner of Switzerland. The Jella Lepman medal is named after the founder of IBBY and was first awarded in 1991 in celebration of the centennial of her birth. The Executive Committee decided to reinstate this specific award of recognition as a permanent institution. The participants enjoyed a banquet and were entertained by young performers from different regions of China.



IBBY Elects Executive Committee 2006–2008

After four years as IBBY president, Peter Schneck stood down and **Patricia Aldana** (Canada) was elected to serve as IBBY president for the next two years. She is the founder and publisher of Groundwood Books in Toronto, which publishes for all ages of children and is known for the high quality of its award-winning Canadian books and for its active programme of translations from other languages. In 1996 the company began to publish original books in Spanish under its imprint *Libros Tigrillo*. Patricia Aldana has been active in the Canadian and international children's book and publishing communities, especially in developing policy that will encourage the national publication of children's books everywhere in the world, the development of readers in all countries, especially through library networks, and in promoting a genuine exchange of books between countries. She previously served as vice-president of IBBY 2004–2006 and 1998–2000 and as a member of the



IBBY Executive Committee 2006–08, from left to right:

Urs Breitenstein, Ahmad Redza Ahmad Khairuddin, Ira Saxena, Hannelore Daubert, Patricia Aldana, Ann Lazim, Elda Nogueira, Reina Duarte, Niklas Bengtsson, Elena Iribarren, Anastasia Arkhipova, Zohreh Chaeni, and Ellis Vance

IBBY Executive Committee from 1996 to 1998.

Elda Nogueira (Brazil) and **Ellis Vance** (USA) were elected by the Executive Committee as the IBBY vice presidents. Elda Nogueira is a teacher and translator and works for IBBY Brazil, in particular in the organisation of the annual *Salão do Livro para Crianças e Jovens* in Rio de Janeiro. She served as an Executive Committee member 2004–06. Ellis Vance is currently project director for the Californian Learning Resource Network reviewing resources for educators to use with children. He also is the treasurer for US IBBY and Bookbird Inc.

Other members elected to serve for a two-year term, until the 2008 IBBY congress in Copenhagen, are as follows:

- **Anastasia Arkhipova** (Russia), a well-known artist and illustrator, holding the title of Honoured Artist of Russia
- **Niklas Bengtsson** (Finland), a prize-winning writer for young people
- **Hannelore Daubert** (Germany), a lecturer on children's literature and didactics at the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University in Frankfurt and former president of IBBY Germany
- **Reina Duarte** (Spain), who manages the department for children's fiction and non-fiction at Editorial Edeb, gives courses in editing at the Pompeu Fabra University in Barcelona and is the vice president of the Catalan branch of Spanish IBBY
- **Elena Iribarren** (Venezuela/France), the international editorial co-ordinator for Bayard Presse in Paris, who also works as a translator and is former director of the foreign rights department for Editions Ekare in Venezuela
- **Ahmad Redza Ahmad Khairuddin** (Malaysia), executive director of Rhythm

Consolidated Berhad, a book publishing and distribution company, and vice president of IBBY Malaysia

- **Ann Lazim** (UK), who was re-elected for a second term on the EC, a librarian in London and co-ordinator of the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (CLPE) poetry award, and the current president of British IBBY
- **Ira Saxena** (India), formerly a counsellor for children and parents, more recently a published author for children, and a founding member of Indian IBBY/AWIC

Zohreh Ghaeni (Iran) was elected as president of the Hans Christian Andersen jury. She has worked as a teacher, on a newspaper for young people, a translator, an English tutor, a book critic, an instructor at workshops for children's book illustration and as an editor of children's books bibliography covering 1965 to 1978. She has given lectures worldwide and organised workshops on different illustrators. She is currently supervisor and co-writer of a research project on the history of children's literature in Iran. She was a member of the Hans Christian Andersen jury for the 2002 and 2004 awards.

Urs Breitenstein (Switzerland), director of Schwabe Publishing House, was confirmed as IBBY treasurer, and Peter Gyr (Switzerland) and Fritz Rothacher (Switzerland) were re-elected as auditors. **Liz Page** (Switzerland) has been appointed as IBBY director of member services, communications and new projects, and **Estelle Roth** (France) has been appointed as IBBY administrative director. Both are based at the IBBY secretariat in Basel, Switzerland.

Valerie Coghlan and **Siobhán Parkinson**, who both live and work in Dublin, Ireland, were confirmed as the editors of IBBY's journal *Bookbird*.

Vasja Will Be Missed

Vasja Cerar, translator and editor; member of the Slovenian IBBY section; member of the IBBY EC 2000–02; member of the organising committee for the IBBY jubilee congress 2002; member of the 2006 Hans Christian Andersen Award jury; IBBY Honour List nominee 2006, died in October 2006.

Vasja will be missed as a translator: his translations for television, his Monty Python ones especially, were gems. He was a perfect translator of young adult literature, as shown by his selection for the IBBY Honour List 2006 for *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*. Vasja will be missed by many translators; he was a fine and highly valued colleague and was in charge of the Slovenian Association of Literary Translators for one term of office.

Vasja will be missed as an editor: translators and authors grew under his care.

Vasja will be missed as a valued member of our section: he strove to keep the standards of the field of children's literature as high as possible and did it in a way that bordered on the impossible: with unpretentious flair.

Vasja will also be missed in many other, more personal ways. He will definitely be missed as a friend, particularly by those to whom he was seen as an older brother.

And all of us will miss him terribly. In recent months he gave us so much and despite his prolonged illness he was able to part from us as a great friend, colleague and person.

Vasja will be missed, but forever remembered.

Jakob Kenda, president of IBBY Slovenia



Vasja Cerar, 1959–2006

Special Issue on Danish Children's Literature – Call for Papers

To mark the IBBY congress to be held in Copenhagen in 2008, the autumn 2008 issue of *Bookbird* will be a special issue on Danish children's literature.

Papers on Danish children's literature should be submitted for consideration for publication in this issue by the end of July 2007. As well as academic papers on children's literature, we are also seeking two information articles: one on a research or other children's literature institution (eg a library or a university department or course) or project in Denmark, and one on an important award for children's literature in Denmark.

Academic papers should not be longer than 3000 words. Information articles should be in the region of 1500 to 1800 words. Ideas for illustrations or photographs should accompany submissions.

Please send papers for consideration as Word or RTF documents by email to bookbirdsp@oldtown.ie and bookbirdvc@oldtown.ie, using the following formula in the subject line:

Bookbird submission XX, where XX stands for your initials. It is very important to follow this instruction, as otherwise emails may be treated as junk or spam and be automatically deleted.

Submission Guidelines for *Bookbird*

Bookbird: A Journal of International Children's Literature is the refereed journal of the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY).

Papers on any topic related to children's literature and of interest to an international audience will be considered for publication. Contributions are invited not only from scholars and critics but also from editors, translators, publishers, librarians, classroom educators and children's book authors and illustrators or anyone working in the field of children's literature. Please try to supply illustrations for your article. (Book covers are sufficient, but other illustrations are also welcome.)

Length: Up to 3000 words

Language: Articles are published in English, but where authors have no translation facilities, we can accept

contributions in most major European languages. Please contact us first if you have a translation problem.

Format: Word for Windows (Mac users please save your document in rich text format – RTF) as an email attachment; send illustrations as JPG attachments.

Style and layout: The author's name and details should appear in the email only, not in the paper itself. A stylesheet is available with more detailed guidelines.

Deadline: *Bookbird* is published every quarter, in January, April, July, October. Papers may be submitted at any time, but it is unlikely that your paper, if accepted for publication, would be published for at least six to nine months from the date of submission, to allow time for refereeing and the production process.

Contact details: Please send two copies: one to bookbirdsp@oldtown.ie AND one to bookbirdvc@oldtown.ie

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Please remember to include your full name and contact details (including postal address), together with your professional affiliation and/or a few lines describing your area of work in the body of your email.

Send us a book postcard from your part of the world!

Notices on international children's books, distributed throughout Bookbird, are compiled from sources around the world by Glenna Sloan, who teaches children's literature at Queens College, City University of New York.



Have you got a favourite recently published children's book – a picturebook, story collection, novel or information book – that you think should be known outside its own country? If you know of a book from your own or another country that you feel should be introduced to the IBBY community, please send a short account of it to us at *Bookbird*, and we may publish it.

Send copy (about 150 words), together with full publication details (use 'postcard' reviews in this issue of *Bookbird* as a model) and a scan of the cover image (in JPG format), to Professor Glenna Sloan (glennasloan@hotmail.com).

We are very happy to receive reviews from non-English-speaking countries – but remember to include an English translation of the title as well as the original title (in transliterated form, where applicable).

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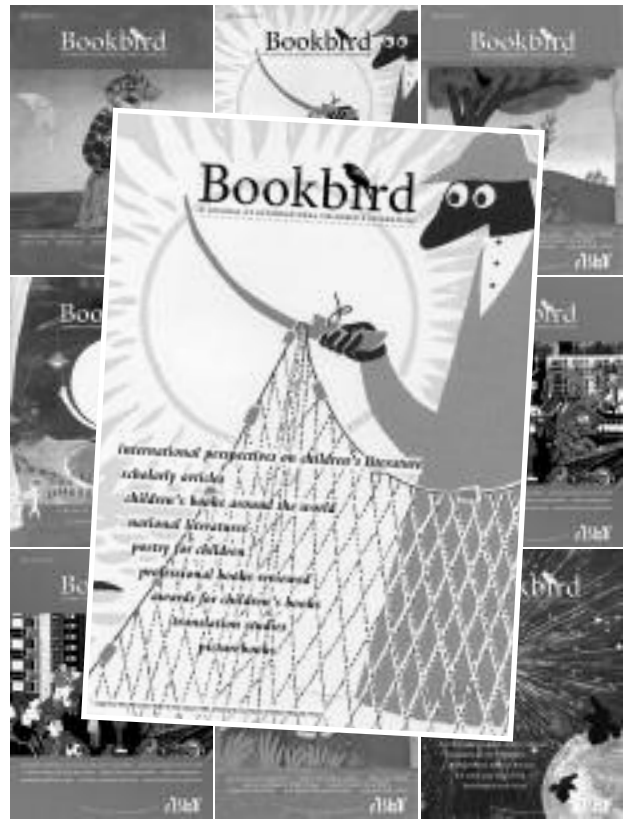
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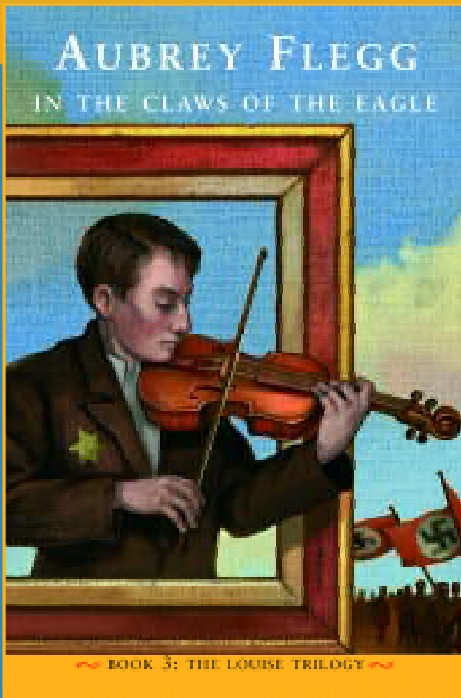
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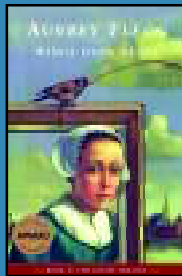


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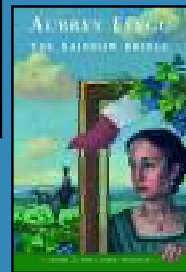
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