

“die Menschen hinter den Büchern stärker ans Licht zu locken” - “drawing the people behind the books into the light”

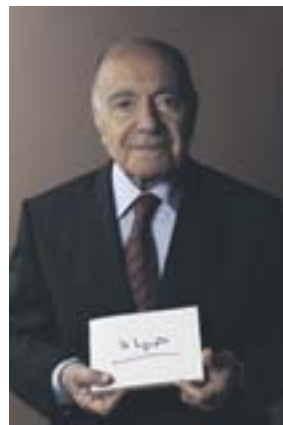
Selection from the “gute-aussichten” photography project in Hall 8.0 M984 by photographers Bianca Gutberlet, Irina Jansen and Christian Hörder. Exhibitors and visitors are invited to stop by the photo studio and get their picture taken with their favorite word.



Brian O'Leary



Ann Betts



Jiryes I Sharbain



Hugo Brik



Geoffrey Staines



Matt Hamlin



Lodewijk van Zonneveld



Dirk Wächter

Japan Feeling Pessimistic, Says Kodansha's Kakishima

By Emily Williams

Editors from Japan and Korea, and increasingly China, come to Frankfurt ready to do business. Often, they will have read the manuscripts on offer ahead of time, but Asia remains a part of the world where pre-empts are still rare. Publishers are still likely to come to Frankfurt with bids in hand, ready to cut a deal in person.

This year is a little different, says Kazunobu Kakishima, editor-in-chief of the translated books department of Tokyo's Kodansha Ltd. Pessimism is the word of the day.

“There is as little sign of an economic recovery in Japan and the economy appears to be stuck,” he says. “Last month the elections brought a big regime change, but our economy remains bogged down, especially the publishing business where conditions remain as critical as ever. We are in a harsh place.”

Despite the optimistic announcement this month of a new Kodansha Comics publishing operation opening in New York, the company has been hard hit by the economic crisis and last year posted a deficit of 7.6 billion yen (\$80.5 million). Other publishers have fared even worse “Some publishers have dropped out of the game. Soshisha was absorbed into another company, and at least one more publisher is said to be on the brink of going under.”

Still, Kakishima's young department has done well since its inception



Japanese publishing house Kodansha Ltd.

in 2006, racking up big sales for Michael Losier's *Law of Attraction*, Daniel Tammet's memoir *Born on a Blue Day*, and most recently Malcolm Gladwell's *Outliers*, which is up to 50,000 copies sold since its release in May.

Kakishima says he looks forward to Frankfurt as a chance to buy up great titles in his key subject areas of business, current affairs, popular science, and self-help—though he says auctions among Japanese publishers are quieter this year, a relief under the circumstances.

“We're trying to save our money,” he said, adding, “but if I find what I'm looking for—the next writer to follow in the footsteps of Malcolm Gladwell or Daniel Pink—I won't hold back.” •

Mobile Publishing in Japan

While many outsiders think of Japan as far ahead of the rest of the world technologically—and in some ways this is true—this advantage has yet to lead to a rapid digital revolution in book publishing.

“As you know, mobile phone novels are popular among the young generation,” Kakishima says. While publishers can profit off of quick print editions of the most popular cell phone books, they are not, for the most part, benefiting from the user-generated electronic content, and “e-books like Kindle are not popular.” Kodansha is signing up digital rights “for the future”, but at present the development of an e-book market is slow.

Seen and Heard: Tamil Nadu, Kalachuvadu Publications, India

One of the leading publishers in Tamil Nadu, India, Kalachuvadu Publications was relaunched in 1996 when Kannan Sundaram (pictured above), decided to revive the literary magazine his father established in 1980s in order to publish the works of Sundara Ramaswamy. Since that time, Kannan has published more than 300 works of fiction and nonfiction in Tamil. Most of these titles are modern works by Tamil writers such as G. Nagarajan and Pudumai Pithan. In addition, Kalachuvadu publishes Tamil translations of some of influential world writers, including Paulo Coelho, Stephen Hawking, and Gabriel Garcia Marquez. This is Kannan's third visit to the Frankfurt Book Fair—he first came as a Frankfurt Fellow in 2007—and he hopes to introduce Tamil literature to publishers from around the world. The book that he's most excited about this year is *The Heat of Water* by Indria (S. Jothimani), a true story of the struggles a young woman faced attempting to follow through on a promise that got her elected to the village panchayat (village assembly)—a promise to bring drinking water to a hamlet populated by the oppressed and “untouchables” of India. •



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Annika Balsler



Ronald Schild



Andrew Richard Albanese



Christina Mussinelli



Herneid von dem Knesebeck



Thomas Minkus



Anne Harbour



Robert Baensch

House of Anansi's MacLachlan on Frankfurt and E-books

By Emily Williams

House of Anansi is one of Canada's most venerable and respected independent houses; small, dynamic, and still holding its own against the big multinationals. Part of this success, president Sarah MacLachlan explained, has been due to a strategy of buying world rights wherever possible and then working actively to sell those rights around the world. Frankfurt is a key part of this strategy, and this year's Fair is no exception.

Book sales in Canada have held steady in the past year, and the country still produces a robust crop of literary prizes, leaving Anansi on a “nice even keel” and with three award nominees it is talking up at the fair. Shani Mootoo's novel *Valmiki's Daughter* was longlisted for the Giller Prize, while Eric Siblín's *Cello Suites* and Wade Davis's *The Wayfinders* are both nonfiction contenders for the Writers' Trust Prize.

MacLachlan has noticed the drop-off in attendance from the US and UK this year, but is still reconnecting with her contacts from continental Europe. Her team puts a lot of preparation into Frankfurt every year, and the expense is nothing to sneeze at, but for MacLachlan the effort pays off.

“I still think it's a vital part of being a publisher in the international market. For us, as an independent Canadian publisher who tries to discover new talent and put that new talent into the world, absolutely essential that we go and let people know what we're doing.”

As an example she remembers *The*

Breadwinner, a YA novel by Deborah Ellis about a young Afghani girl. “*The Breadwinner* came out in the North American market just before September 11, 2001 and we've sold it, and two subsequent volumes, in almost every territory around the world. The trilogy has sold over two million copies, worldwide, earning \$1 million in royalties, which Deborah has then given to an Afghani NGO. So when I think about something like that I know that [it happened] because we go to Frankfurt.”

MacLachlan, too, is optimistic about the outcome from this year's Fair. “What doesn't change is this meeting of the tribes aspect. We do this rare and wonderful thing which is make books, and once a year people from all around the world get together to talk about the books that they make, and it's still as passionate a conversation and still as enjoyable a group of people as you'll ever want to hang out with. For me that is still one of the great reasons to go.” •

Lessons on English Language Territories and E-books

The past year has seen Anansi's first experiments with e-books, and Sarah MacLachlan has already learned how hard it is to maintain territorial boundaries between English-speaking countries

“you're only as strong
as the data you control”



online. Before Anansi ever started selling e-books they found 12-15 of their books available on Shortcovers from the US editions. The problem was corrected, but MacLachlan quickly recognized the absurdity of national borders in an online world, and accordingly Anansi is taking big steps to prepare for the digital future.

“We have reorganized our production department because we believe

tion there needs to be what we're calling a cross media group, because we no longer can just think about how you construct a book and put it on paper and put it into the market. We have to consider how we might deconstruct a book or reformat a book. Basically we're content aggregators, and however people might want to get that content, we sort of have to be able to deliver it. We're doing a major project to deal with data management within the company because what we do know is you're only as strong as the data you control. Being able to see all of the different sales channels electronically is a big concern of ours, and then being able to repurpose content so that we can use it for promotion to send to Amazon, to send to Bowker, to send to Baker & Taylor. The cross media group will deal with all of those eventualities and one of those would be of course creating ebooks.”

As the digital market takes a bigger chunk of sales, MacLachlan also expects that Anansi's revenues from foreign rights sales to the US, UK and Australia could dry up, but there is still time for the house to adapt if they move quickly and aggressively. In this MacLachlan sees an advantage to being a 23-person company; it is easier for Anansi to make the necessary structural changes than for some of their bigger and more unwieldy competitors. “I think that it's universally felt that anything big right now is having a hard time, and that the big houses are just too big to be sustained. I do think we benefit a little bit from that.” •

that somewhere within the organiza-

Visit the House of Anansi Press in Frankfurt: **Hall 8.0 K959**