

2005 VOL 43, NO. 4

# Bookbird

A JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

*the Cotsen Children's Library*

*Pullman, Arai and ALMA*

*Ionesco for kids*

*Castilian comics*

*professional books reviewed*

*book 'postcards' from around the world*

*an Iberian 'The Emperor's New Clothes'*

*the magical world of Dušan Kállay*

INTERNATIONAL BOARD ON BOOKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

iBBY

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

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*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

We often ask ourselves, in those idle moments, what kind of bird *Bookbird* is: at rare (and luckily swiftly passing) moments, it seems to have some of the characteristics of the albatross; more often we imagine ourselves sending it out like Noah's dove with an olive branch in its beak to test the literary waters and take a message of peace to the world; we've thought of it as a thrush (homely and beady-eyed, fierce and sweet-voiced) or a seagull (predatory and fierce and given to shrieking but very beautiful in flight), and someone has even mentioned the word 'mocking-bird' in our hearing!

The grave and top-hatted ghost of Hans Christian Andersen has been like a benign and slightly anxious presence hovering somewhere about the edge of things all through this first year that we have spent twittering avidly in our golden editorial cage, so perhaps it would be more appropriate to think of *Bookbird* as one of those birds that figure so frequently in Andersen's work: a lark, a nightingale or a swallow – symbols of joy, achievement, modesty, loyalty and the transformative power of art. (Oh yes, we say to ourselves, that's precisely it!)

## Bookbird editors

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We think it is true to say that every issue of this year has featured HCA in one way or another, and as his bicentennial year draws to a close, we are delighted to present, in this final issue of our first *Bookbird* year, a fascinating study of a Spanish/Portuguese picturebook interpretation of that most beloved and in ways most typical of Andersen's tales, 'The Emperor's New Clothes'. Andersen's most enduring legacy to the imaginative world of children everywhere is surely that acknowledgement of childhood's surprised, irreverent, unabashed, accurate and perceptive exclamation: 'But the king is naked!'



*The ghost of Hans Christian Andersen receives birthday wishes at the Bologna Book Fair 2005 (Jant van der Weg, Jeffrey Garrett, Michael O'Brien)*

As well as his starring appearance in that essay on *El traje nuevo del rey*, Hans Christian Andersen plays walk-on parts here and there throughout the issue, as he has done all year, and we will leave it to readers to spot him as he flits from page to page. Meanwhile, we hope readers will also enjoy reading about Ionesco's extraordinary writings for children, Dušan Kállay's artwork, children's comics in Spain, the amazing Cotsen Children's Library in the US, and the work of the joint winners of this year's Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award, Philip Pullman and Ryôji Arai, as well as the book 'postcards' and reviews for children's literature professionals.

For the last time in this 200th year, happy birthday, Hans Christian, and happy reading, Bookbirdies everywhere!



# El traje nuevo del rey

Semiotic Interaction between the Iconic and the Verbal

- El traje nuevo del rey is a new interpretation
- by Xosé Ballesteros and João Caetano of
- 'The Emperor's New Clothes'.
- In this Hans Christian Andersen bicentenary
- year, this paper examines the semiotic
- interaction between verbal (textual) and
- iconic (visual) components in this
- Spanish/Portuguese picturebook

The prevalent use today of hybrid audiovisual 'languages' has converted the whole world into an immense 'text'. Accordingly, the concept of reading – initially referring only to decoding language – has expanded to include the decoding of other signs, so that it now makes sense to talk in terms of 'reading' images. This new way of reading is assuming increasing importance in the field of children's picturebooks, where the verbal and iconic texts work together to establish the story's meaning. In order to 'read' such a story, one has to pay attention not only to what the words mean, but also to what the illustrations tell us (Nodelman 1988; Sipe 1998;

by JORGE CARVALHO and  
FERNANDO FRAGA DE AZEVEDO



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Nikolajeva and Scott 2000; Colomer 2002; García Padrino 2004).

Iurij Lotman (1975) said that there cannot be superfluous or non-justified complexity in an adequately constructed semiotic system. Thus the relation of semiotic harmony between the iconic and the verbal in a picturebook originates a new and complex signifying object that is only readable if one attends to the hybrid nature of its codes and the process of semiotic interaction with the readers. An important implication of all this is that images and their graphic organisation within a book may exist not simply to confirm and illustrate what is said in the text but to interact playfully with meanings established verbally.

***A picturebook text can challenge us to play with a range of meanings*** :

Literary texts often deliberately leave gaps in order to achieve active reader cooperation (Eco 1979; Sipe 1998). In the same way, a picturebook text can be free – in what it says and in what it does not say but simply promises or suggests – with no pre-established direction

and, by means of processes of expansion, overlapping or inversion between text and images, can challenge us to play with a range of meanings with enlarged possibilities of interpretation. Such texts can lead us along marginal paths, where we are unbalanced from the comfortable, simple and predictable paths of reading, making us wonder: *What is this thing doing here? What does this mean? This is fun; it makes me remember ... or is it something else?* Hence our attention is directed onto the story and our

***Our reading process remains alert to the smallest sign able to add meaning*** :

reading process remains alert to the smallest sign able to add meaning. We doubt the way the text is organised from one page to another; we cannot help trying to understand the awkward positioning of a line or a doll present in the illustration; we become suspicious of the letter size and font; we may be troubled by a character

drawn with an ill-favoured sundial-shaped nose, and we might even question an exaggerated distance between the syllables of a word. Our eye will be guided by an almost expert willingness to deconstruct.

## About the author and the illustrator

**Xosé Ballesteros** has written several books for children and is co-editor of the series ‘Books to Dream’ from the Spanish (Galician) publishing house, Kalandraka. *El traje nuevo del rey* has been published in Spanish, Galician, Catalan, Portuguese and Basque.

**João Caetano** was born on Mozambique, studied painting at the Escola Superior de Belas Artes of Oporto (Portugal) and has been working as an illustrator since 1981. He illustrated *A maior flor do mundo* by the Nobel prize-winner José Saramago, published in Portugal in 2001.

This way of reading is analogous to a child breaking a toy to see how it works; we are hoping for a better-informed interpretive reconstruction. After breaking the toy, we sometimes reconstruct a different toy; or, when there are pieces left over, we perhaps create more toys inside the first one; or finally, we might leave everything spread out on the floor until we feel like starting all over again.

In this way, illustrations do not always work as an easy way to interpret a text or as an explanation of what is said. Instead they work suggestively, encouraging the reader to construct what is less evident or those things that ordinarily are not shown, calling up his or her curiosity and creativity in plural interpretive experiences.

### ***Reinterpretation of the Andersen story***

In Ballesteros and Caetano's version of Andersen's story, this mechanism of doubt is established by imagery of the grotesque, which uses irony and caricature to ridicule the emperor's figure and behaviour. Looking back to Andersen's original text, we realise that Ballesteros's retelling shows a stronger ideological force. There are several situations where the adaptation process and the intercultural intertextuality (Pascua Febles 1998) bring to the surface, without euphemisms, situations that were only latent in the original text. For example, some of the psychological characteristics of the emperor presented in the 1837 text are suppressed in the Ballesteros version and replaced with action. Rather than telling the reader his thoughts, this king shows the reader that he can act, and through action ironically presented through the interaction of the verbal and the iconic texts is shown all the absurdity and inconsistency of the king's power.

As Sodr e and Paiva (2002) point out,

*... the grotesque is not defined as a simple object of aesthetic contemplation but as a creative experience connected to a special kind of meditation on life. In each image or text there is a direct link between creative expression and everyday existence.*

Indeed, challenging or disrupting hierarchical or canonical assumptions, the grotesque imposes on the reader the active filling of gaps and the exercise of a critical and interpretive way of seeing the world.

We recognise that the emperor is crazy about new

***• Ballesteros's retelling shows  
• a stronger ideological force  
• than Andersen's original***

***• The grotesque imposes on  
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• of gaps and the exercise of  
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• way of seeing the world***

clothes; that he is extremely vain. We accept, for the same reason, that his particular taste is reflected in many ways in the daily life of his kingdom. That is all fine. However, looking at the images, we become aware of certain uncomfortable feelings arising from the king's excessive delight in his own figure. The fact is that the emperor, this almighty being, rules a kingdom where the houses and objects are associated, in an excessively unnatural way, with the physical universe of sewing – snipping and sewing, an activity, as we all know, unworthy of an emperor!

However, the principle of the fictional (Schmidt 1987), which suggests a suspension of reference between the world of the book and the one that we live in, can make us believe that, in the book, 'everything is possible, particularly the reconstruction and contraband of realities'. For this reason, the grotesque seems to emerge in this 'reorganisation of the world by means of the gathering together of symbolically distant entities, constituting a frequently humorous resource' (Gonçalves 2002).

This is how and why the buttons not only represent the royal coat of arms, but also reflect the king's thoughts; the needle makes its appearance held high by the character on the back cover as a sign of affirmation (or, rather, of belief), and in the hands of a little boy as a toy; the zip falls open and flaps in the wind like a flag in the hands of the advisor about to break

***Reduced to a representation from the waist down, the emperor's royal image becomes that of his enormous body*** :

the good news; the baby's safety pin is used to outline a house; the guards' helmets are thimbles, and so on.

The changes in the objects' normal function and their de-contextualised change of place are specific aspects of a process of fantasy, which, besides making us laugh, encourage us to consider that all things can, in fact, be seen in a different way and gain and lose meanings.

The same can happen with a change of dimension or matter. A change of dimension happens when, for example, the king is presented to us, in the first pages, as if he had the entire city upon his head. Buildings, fields and trees ornament the crown, as an evident sign of wealth, power and grandiosity. However, if we associate that image of the 'little town' with the somewhat childish image of the emperor, playing with his laces with his 'chubby fingers' so covered in rings, we realise that his power is only 'a small one', in fact the domain of a fool – the same fool who believes in the magical and fantastically sublime possibility of the existence of an invisible cloth.

Another unusual effect occurs with the representation of the lower half of the king's body, which is seen in a low-angle shot. This process seems to reveal





expressive possibilities for the grotesque, represented by the close-up of his immense naked and deformed pink body. However, this point of view also makes us believe that we are seeing the same thing as the little boy, inviting us to be witnesses to his particular and unique vision of reality – we see what he sees and what nobody else sees.

Reduced to a representation from the waist down, the emperor's royal image definitively becomes that of his enormous body and the ridiculous acts and artefacts that surround it. See, for example, how the privilege of 'being served' is treated, suggesting, among many things, an infantile incapacity on the emperor's part to take off his own underwear! But a king is still a king, and, in the eyes of the little boy, he was still grand, the image of magnificence, as all kings are imagined to be, even if it was only because of his carefully embroidered lace socks and glorious golden shoes.

The low-angle shot also serves to confuse our attention by placing us among the crowd made up of short people and tall people, animals, eggs and even more people, a carnival of heterogeneous figures gathered behind a horizontal line that unites the guards at their waist. Below this line, which is drawn at the height of the little boy's head, we can also see an old man in a wheelchair, animals, beggars and other children – all, apparently, representing the less able. This image suggests to some extent that these people share the same vision as the little boy. Above the line, in mid-frame, there are many characters, including a wise man and a clergyman. At the top, above all the others, we see the jester, perched on stilts, a balcony of applauding noblemen and, of course, the king himself, made grand by the perspective. On the next page, still manipulated by the use of perspective, the line strikes from the highest corner right down to the ground, thus sheltering everyone under it – it is the moment when all share the little boy's opinion.

The bringing together of contradictory elements is another effect that gains impact in many situations throughout the book. This provokes a disconcerting feeling of a simultaneous *yes, it is* and *no, it isn't*, which tends to ridicule the emperor. See, for example, the moment when the tailors describe the



• *A carnival of*  
 • *heterogeneous figures*





‘marvellous cloth’ to the king. We can easily imagine layers of contradictory pairs which present themselves in the context of the room:

- the figures of the tailors, one fat and one thin, clearly impostors but at the same time appearing humble
- the use of parody in the juxtaposition of the king’s pose and that of Saint Jerome in the Jan van Eyck painting on the opposite side of the room, giving the impression that both are dealing with a matter of equal erudition
- the presence of animals, printed colourfully and playfully on the cloth of the king’s suit, and at the same time portrayed as a serene presence in the room
- the half-eaten apple in a fruit bowl filled with exotic and exuberant fruit

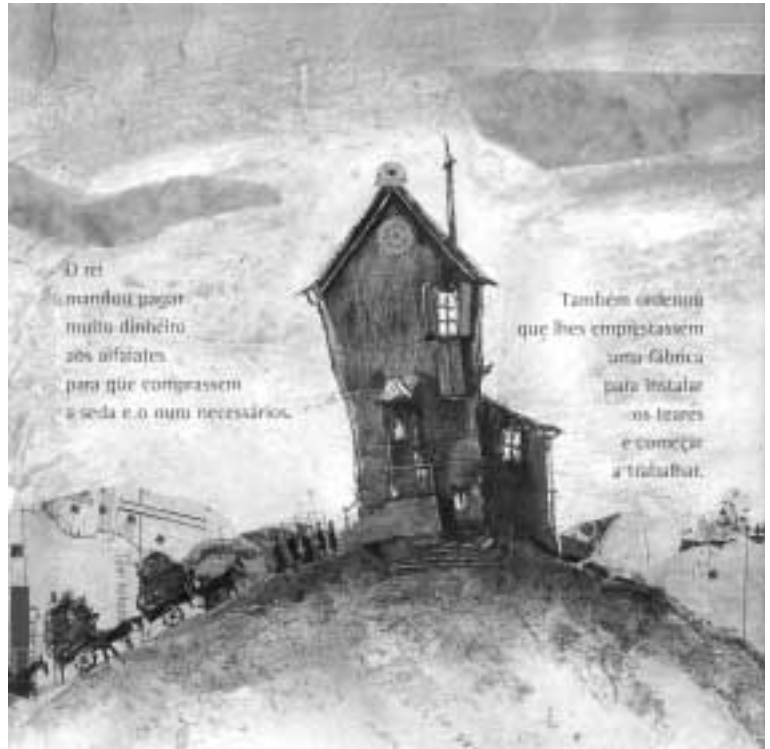
In all this,

*the mode, or art, par excellence, in the imagery of the grotesque is laughter ... from which nobody and nothing escapes, including the one who is laughing ... Everything is laughable; there is nothing that doesn’t have an element*

*of the ridiculous. Laughter makes everything relative, arbitrary, transitory, ephemeral, mischievous; in conclusion, vulnerable. (Gonçalves 2002)*

This inquiring perspective about what we see and read is really interesting when we look at the way lines and texts demand our attention. For example, on the double page where the two tailors are presented playing with gold, there is an interesting symmetrical composition: two hills facing each other; on one hill is an old building which exhibits symbols of real estate; on the other side, the tailors are on a hill of gold and presented in a position that is similar to the form of the previous illustration. Meanwhile, if we look from left to right, reading the text, we can see that it is organised in blocks coming down the page, gradually describing a line whose inclination invites us to notice the empty wagon at the edge of the page, opposed to the full wagon of the previous page. In this way the reader is invited to look at details that may confirm the humbug and the mismanagement by which the crazed king rules his kingdom.

The image seen on the mannequin and reproduced on the royal clothes seems to represent the king's satisfaction in the form of a smiling face. The relationship between the mannequin and the king is thus made obvious to us. This relationship is based on his excessive pleasure (translated by the smile/mask) in seeing himself in new clothes. In a certain way the





***His Royal Highness smiles, 'disguised' as himself*** :

mechanism of the grotesque in this book works to denounce the progressive and dangerous approximation between the two terms of the relationship which we see as being capable of 'testing' his identity and thus, at the height of the ridicule, one exchanges place with the other. This is made much more explicit when, at a certain point, the object seems to gain life and, as it imitates the king's gestures, the two inevitably end up colliding – king and dummy are the same.

After that, the king prepares himself: he walks onto the stage and, for a few moments, during his parade, His Royal Highness smiles, 'disguised' as himself.

This osmosis between the Self and the Other, clearly used to exhibit the material

and corporeal principle in the context of a popular and genuine festivity, parodies the king's figure, disabling his power, his intelligence and his capacity for action. This parody provokes a laughter that is

similar to the laughter Mikhail Bakhtine (1970) points out is evoked by Rabelais' work: a collective excited and sarcastic laughter. The text itself, in its verbal and iconic dimensions, explicitly demands of the reader a critical and interpretive attitude, and no longer only a naïve or 'gastronomic' one.

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Xosé Ballesteros and João Caetano *O traje novo do rei* Lisbon: Kalandraka (2003)

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## Call for articles: China issue



IBBY's international biennial congress will be held in Beijing in September 2006 (see the 'Focus IBBY' section of *Bookbird* 43.2 or 43.3 for details). To celebrate this event, *Bookbird* plans to publish articles on Chinese children's literature in *Bookbird* 44.3 (to be published in July 2006). Submissions on children's literature of other countries in the South-East Asia region will also be considered.

Articles may be on historical Chinese or other South-East Asian children's literatures, but we would especially welcome articles on the children's literature that is being produced in China (or other South-East

Asian countries) today.

Submissions (2000–3000 words) for this issue should be sent as soon as possible, and in any event before the end of 2005, to the *Bookbird* editors, at the usual *Bookbird* editorial addresses:

bookbirdsp@oldtown.ie  
and bookbirdvc@oldtown.ie

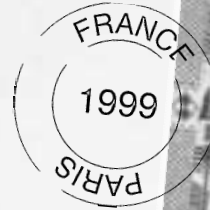
Please send copies of your article (as a Microsoft Word or .RTF attachment) to *both* editors.

See submission guidelines on page 55 for more details.

The American Library Association's prestigious Batchelder Award is a citation awarded annually to an American publisher for a children's book considered to be the most outstanding of those books originally published in a foreign language in a foreign country and subsequently translated into English and published in the United States. **THE SHADOW OF GHADAMES**, winner of the 2005 Batchelder Award, is the story of 11-year-old Malika's coming of age in 19th-century Libya.

Malika questions the restrictions she encounters in the severely constricted world of Libyan women of that time. 'Readers will sympathize with Malika, the rebellious adolescent, while Stolz's rich and compelling detail invites them into her world, said the Award Committee Chair, Marilyn Hollinshead. The work is further praised by Suzanne Fisher Staples, author of the Newbery honor book, **SHABANU**. She writes, 'I was enchanted by this story of a brave Berber girl who dares to dream and its filigree of details about harem life, ancient trade routes, goddesses and healers. The real beauty of **THE SHADOW OF GHADAMES** is that it transcends the exotic to explore universal truths about the condition of being human.'

Glenna Sloan



Joelle Stolz

LES OMBRES DE GHADAMES  
= THE SHADOWS OF GHADAMES  
(trans Catherine Temersen)

Paris: Bayard Editions Jeunesse 1999  
and New York: Delacorte / Random House 2004 120pp  
ISBN 2227739088 (French ed) / 0385731043 (US ed)  
(historical fiction, 8-12)

With powerful, dream-like illustrations, Gerald Espinoza tells a strange story about a rooster. Gallo Gali Galo is fond of giving many versions of a single fact. Gallo lives with a boy named Lucas, who serves him breakfast (or maybe soup), and takes him to his first day at school, where he cries a little (or a lot). Once there, Gallo gathers his ambiguous impressions: the children are tall (or small); the teacher is pretty (or a bit ugly). At the end of the day, Gallo starts towards home. Confronted with two roads, he can't decide on one over the other and is never seen again, suggesting that his character may itself have been a lie.

Small children who tend to mix reality and fiction are teased by an author telling and untelling them a story. Espinoza provides opposite versions of every incident with wit and skill in language simple and musical enough to entice children to join in his game of make-believe. Illustrations in vivid, striking colours executed in a wild, free style allude to a world removed from realism and reflect the made-up nature of the storyteller's world. Espinoza creates an ingenious, well-constructed exploration of childlike and artistic imagination.

Cristina Puerta



Gerald Espinoza

GALLO GALI GALO [Rooster Gali Gali]

Caracas: Camelia Ediciones 2004 24pp

ISBN 9806450205 (picturebook, 4+)

# Eugène Ionesco's Writings for Children



••• *Marina Debattista introduces four little-known absurdist tales for children by Eugène Ionesco, who is of course much better known for his absurdist plays for adults; and an ambiguously entitled book of poems, which will be new to most non-Romanian readers*

**I**n his memoirs, undoubtedly intended for adults, *Present Past Past Present*, Eugène Ionesco (1972) included four tales 'for children less than three years old'. This was not Ionesco's first brush with children's literature: his debut poetry collection *Elegii pentru fiinte mici* [Elegies for small beings], published in Romanian in 1931 and still unknown to English-speaking readers, anticipates important themes found throughout Ionesco's theatre of the absurd.

by MARINA DEBATTISTA



*Marina Debattista is a freelance writer and illustrator*

### ***Tales for children***

Each of the 'tales for children less than three years old' concludes a chapter of a book that is replete with adult anxieties interspersed with memories of a luminous, intense childhood. The four tales complement and enhance a text haunted by nostalgia for lost childhood:

*To be driven from childhood is to be driven from paradise, it is to be an adult. You keep the memory, the nostalgia of a present, of a presence, of a plenitude that you try to rediscover by every possible means.*

Apart from serving as recurrent reminders of childhood's plenitude, the stories provide Ionesco with a genre in which he can put forth the literary nonsense inaugurated by the proto-Surrealists. More specifically, under the appearance of children's tales, Ionesco playfully, but deliberately, illustrates such favourite Surrealistic devices as the absurd and language games.

***The tales complement  
and enhance a text  
haunted by nostalgia for  
lost childhood*** :

The first three of these stories have in fact been published separately, as genuine children's books. Two audacious, unconventional editors, Harlin Quist and François Ruy-Vidal, took the risk of offering these books to children. The publication of *Story Number One* and *Story Number Two* coincided with the most efferves-

cent years for Harlin Quist. As is typical of the books he published in those years, the text is superbly complemented by the illustrations, for the editors strongly believed in a reading in which text and image interact with each other. In a recent interview, François Ruy-Vidal (2003) recollects:

*I chose people [writers] who were not afraid of their words, who, moreover, were not afraid of what these words meant.*

And indeed words and their meaning are the essence of Ionesco's stories for children under three.

The main character of the four tales is little Josette. In each of the stories Josette naturally accepts and participates in a situation which violates common sense. Her linguistic naiveté and childish unawareness of the properties of space and time invite and accommodate nonsense, as well as the marvellous. It is her father – evidently Ionesco's double – who guides her through the marvellous, and for this is rebuked – 'You are going to drive that little girl crazy, sir' – by the voice of reason, personified by the cleaning lady, Jacqueline. Josette's father is portrayed as ostensibly childish: gluttonous, enjoying puppet shows, fairs and movies, playing silly games and telling crazy stories. Like Alice's adventures, those of Josette and her father emerge from common everyday situations.



*Illustrations by Etienne Delessert, Editions Gallimard Jeunesse, 1983*





In the first tale, her father tells Josette a story that quickly turns into a piece of absurd literature:

*One day little Jacqueline, along with her daddy Jacqueline, and her mama Jacqueline, went to the Bois de Boulogne. There they met their friends Jacqueline and their little girl Jacqueline with her dolls named Jacqueline, Jacqueline, and Jacqueline and their little boy Jacqueline with the lead soldiers named Jacqueline.*

Clearly Ionesco is parodying himself here, alluding to all the Bobby Watsons from his play *The Bald Soprano*.

In the second tale, Josette talks to her father through the bathroom door, while dutifully looking for him in the impossible places he suggests 'under the table, in the closet, under the rug, behind the door, in the kitchen, and in the garbage can'.

In the third tale, Josette takes an aeroplane trip to the moon and eats a piece of it, which, surprisingly, tastes 'like melon'.

In the fourth, she learns from her father the 'right meaning of words', namely that

*The chair is a window. The window is a pen. The pillow is bread. The bread is the rug by the bed. Feet are ears. Arms are feet. A head is a derriere. A derriere is a head. Eyes are fingers. Fingers are eyes.*

The interchangeability of words has a poetic potency that was appealing to the Surrealists. In particular, Michel Leiris's explicitly Surrealist programme proposed taking advantage of the 'fundamental ambiguity' of language to create personal poetical equivalencies between words:

*My language, like any language is figurative and you have the freedom to replace 'whiskey' by any other word, absolute, crime, love, disaster or mandrake. (Bartolli-Anglard 1989)*

Like most children, Josette spontaneously accepts the 'fundamental ambiguity' of language and soon her chat seems derived from a piece of automatic writing:

*I look through the chair as I eat my pillow. I open the wall, and walk with my ears. I have ten eyes to walk and two fingers to look. I sit with my head on the floor. I put my derriere on the ceiling. When I've eaten the music box, I put jam on the rug by the bed and have a good dessert.*

Like little Josette, Ionesco plays with words, but there is no childish innocence in his game. The problem of language is a serious one for the Surrealists, who seek the rebirth of language, which in their view had been depleted of vigour, meaning, and poetry through an 'increasingly narrow utilitarian usage' (Bartolli-Anglard 1989). To this end they dismantle language piece by piece, and set the words free through automatic writing. Like



***Ionesco plays with words, :  
but there is no childish :  
innocence in his game :***

small children, Surrealists believe in the magic powers of the language.

Ionesco's attitude towards words is extremely close to the Surrealists':

*The poet cannot invent new words every time, of course. He uses the words of the tribe. But handling the word, the accent, a new articulation renews them. (Ionesco 1972)*

The fourth tale shows just how much one can renew language by handling words.

***Elegies for small beings***

That Ionesco addresses such significant issues in a text intended 'for children less than three years old' is certainly playfully ironic, but not surprising. Long before becoming famous for his theatre of the absurd, in his debut volume, *Elegii pentru ființe mici* [Elegies for small beings], Ionesco displayed the same playfulness in approaching serious themes. Published in Romanian, despised by their author (who once said, 'Oh, they are lamentable! They display a rudimentary anthropomorphism'), and never translated, these poems would have been forgotten if a new generation of Romanian critics (including Alexandra Hamdan, Dan C Mihăilescu and Ioana Pârvulescu) had not claimed that there is nothing more Ionescian than the Elegies (Pârvulescu 2003). The Elegies are in fact only vaguely Surrealist, but such Ionescian

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***The parody operates both  
at the stylistic and at the  
thematic level*** :

themes as the man as marionette, death, nostalgia for the lost paradise of childhood, and language are already present.

The Elegies were not explicitly meant for children, but, like the four tales, they belong to a literature that is appealing to children as well as to adults. The universe of the Elegies is a realm made of cardboard and rags, not bigger than 'three metres squared', in which evolve human-puppets, animated toys, as well as children. This is the fantastic world of a child, enlivened by its imagination, but corrupted by derision and the grotesque. Moreover, slow decay erodes this fragile and composite world. There is, in the Elegies, a whole troupe of rag dolls, harlequins, porcelain and wax dolls, all strange amalgams of humans and marionettes. Like the 'modern *mannequin*', emblematic for Surrealists, Ionesco's marionette is a 'symbol capable of affecting our sensibility' (Breton 1972) especially because of its ambiguity. In the Elegies the marionettes are allowed to dance, fight, fall in love, cry a lot (thus justifying the title of the volume) and die – a destiny that is at the same time tragic and grotesque.

Alexandra Hamdan (1993) argues that the 'Grotesque Elegies' – the second half of the

volume – are parodies of traditional Romanian popular verse. The parody operates both at the stylistic and at the thematic level. The characters and the situations typical of ballads and of love songs are ridiculed and miniaturised. They act according to human laws, but they hardly can be identified as humans, and their universe is upside down. The portrait of the girl who is in love ('Love Song') could not contrast more with the impersonally perfect, beautiful girls portrayed in popular songs:

*Her face, like an ascot,  
Her nose made of cardboard  
And her mouth ornate  
Ugly teeth, of chocolate.*

The hero of the 'Ballad' is an indolent dwarf, who 'lives in a tulip, and pees in a pipe'. He too bears more resemblance to a puppet than to a human being. He too is in love but, unlike traditional Romanian popular heroes, he ends up crushed by his beloved Girl Tower.

The all-pervading death by slow decay anticipates a central theme in Ionesco's theatre, that of spiritual and physical degeneration, related to the irreversible loss of the plenitude of childhood.

*The feeling that I am beginning to fall apart.  
[...] One tooth goes, then another. One lock of  
hair, then another. Then a fingernail, a finger*

***The lustreless eye, a metaphor that appears several times in the Elegies, will be associated later with the loss of beauty, grace and plenitude of the child*** :

*joint, a finger, a hand ... Little by little, little by little we disappear, we come undone, we melt away. (Ionesco 1972)*

Emblematic of the body deserted by spirit and intelligence, the doll leaks straw from her elbow, her head and her neck, while her 'rag pupil is inert'. The lustreless eye, a metaphor that appears several times in the Elegies, will be associated later with the loss of beauty, grace and plenitude of the child, deplored by the adult Ionesco. Moreover, as pointed out by Ioana Pârvulescu, this grotesque doll with a 'crooked mouth' is an embryo of the typical character of Ionesco's plays.

*It's broken  
the doll that moved her right arm  
when you pulled the left string,  
and the left leg,  
when you pulled the right string.*

From a child's broken toy to a human condition that Ionesco regards as essential, this is the evolution of the Elegies' rag doll.

Deliberately enhancing the strings that act on the dolls in his 1931 poems – as Pârvulescu notes – is Ionesco's philosophy as exposed in a 1959 text *Expérience du théâtre*: 'One should not hide the strings, but make them even more visible, deliberately conspicuous, exhaust the grotesque, the caricature' (Pârvulescu 2003).

Evidently, the 19-year-old Ionesco applied his

budding artistic philosophy to the half-human half-marionette creatures that populate the Elegies. Genuine lyricism and the tenderness with which Ionesco looks at the small beings of his debut poems often mitigate the grotesque and the caricature. The best example of this tenderness is the candid self-portrait as marionette that closes the volume: 'I am accepting my marionette condition,' wrote Ionesco in a Romanian magazine in 1936 (Mihăilescu 1996).

*Crazy  
and hazy,*

*as I was  
I loved myself*

*Clumsily, in the food,  
I planted my left foot,*

*and I wouldn't walk too tight  
even with the right.*

*But in the breeze  
I could walk at ease,*

*And, if over stars I'd stumble  
I would grab myself a bundle.*

*As I was  
I loved myself.*

### ***Paintings and lithographs***

Ionesco's interest in childhood resurfaces in the imagery developed in his little-known paintings and lithographs. With childish appetite and self-assurance, Ionesco painted little crooked manikins – vividly coloured, or simply reduced to dark silhouettes – who dance and play, take a walk with their family, fight (purposelessly), go to school, engage in sports, run, are terrified by a tyrannical *maître d'école* with a triangular head reminiscent of a bird of prey or by a *méchante dame*, unmistakable representation of death.

This is the visual counterpart of the world of the Elegies.

### Conclusion

Ionesco's stories and his debut poetry display an affinity with the world of children shared by many Surrealists and proto-Surrealists. In Ionesco's view childhood is simply 'the world of miracle or of magic' (1972). In each of the four stories we plunge directly into its magic: the world is created afresh, so is language, all is possible, and all is a childish game. In the Elegies the world is also seen through a child's eye, but its darker side is revealed. Childhood, privileged by the Surrealists as closest to one's 'real life', is not reducible to comfortable clichés of innocent joy.

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The Nautilus Book Awards honour books of excellence that contribute to positive social change. This is a unique book award, recognising authors and titles that contribute to society's awareness and embrace of spiritual and ecological values such as compassion, simplicity and global peace. **TIBETAN TALES FOR LITTLE BUDDHAS** is the winner for 2005 in the picturebook category. The Nautilus website has this to say about this book, bilingual in English and Tibetan: 'Three charmingly translated tales feature young Tibetans living in a remote mountainous region .... Balanced yet magical, the tales teach compassionate responsibility for all of life. The author's vibrant acrylic and pastel illustrations richly reinforce simple yet profound teachings.' The Dalai Lama writes in the foreword, 'because this book retells stories set in Tibet, readers in other lands will naturally become aware of the existence of our country and of the values we hold dear'.

The three stories, offering glimpses into Tibetan culture and philosophy, are accompanied by some statements explaining recent Tibetan history, a glossary of Tibetan words, a map of the area and a description of a Tibetan chant.

Glenna Sloan



Naomi C Rose

(Trans into Tibetan by Pasang Tenzin)

**TIBETAN TALES FOR LITTLE BUDDHAS**

Santa Fé, NM: Clear Light Publishing 2004 64pp  
ISBN 1574160818 (picturebook, all ages)

# I Have Dušan's Soul at Home

The Magic World of Dušan Kállay

by BARBARA BRATHOVÁ



Barbara Brathová is head of the Biennial of Illustrations Bratislava – BIB – a project of Bibiana (the International House of Art for Children), Bratislava, Slovakia

• In this review-style article, Barbara Brathová uses his recently published volume of collected work, *Magický svet* [Magic world], to introduce the work of Slovakia's finest illustrator, Dušan Kállay

Dušan Kállay

*Magický svet* [Magic world]

Bratislava: Slovart 2004 360pp ISBN 80 7145 899 6

Dušan Kállay's *Magický svet* [Magic world] was published at the end of 2004 by Slovart and exquisitely graphically designed and presented by the Rabbit & Solution studio – the photographers are Juraj Králik and Martin Marenčin and the typography is by Vladislav Rostoka. It is obvious from this publication that an enormous amount of creative and thoughtful work has gone into its production: it is the work of a whole team of people. Everyone who participated in the making of this monography, rightfully deserves our admiration.

The book covers the work of a significant Slovak artist and professor, Dušan Kállay, who is a disciple of Albín Brunovský's school of illustration, and is a wonderful account of his lifework, covering graphic work, ex libris, drawings, paintings, illustrations, posters and stamp-making, films. The accompanying texts by two scholars of fine art – Ivan Jančár and Fedor Kriška – together with the artist's own thoughts and life observations capture not only his creative process,



influences, development and motivation, but also those little private remarks about childhood and youth, thus formulating major truths in a natural and human form, peculiar to him.

The publication is packed with the artist's life's work from his student years all the way to the artistic masterpieces of Dušan Kállay's present-day work. The book introduces his work in its full expansiveness, with its contrasts and its significant overlapping of genres, clearly detailing the author's artistic 'buoys' carefully released onto the 'sea' of his imagination. Not only do they set boundaries but they also point to the differently imagined possibilities that his work develops in the perception of the spectator.

Dušan Kállay was born in Bratislava in 1948. He studied (1966–72) at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design (VŠVU) in Bratislava, in the department of figural composition and landscape-painting under Professor Želibský. He has been working for the VŠVU in Bratislava since 1990 where, as a professor, he supervises the free graphics and book illustration department. As far as his own work is concerned, he has been engaged in free graphics, illustration, painting, drawing, ex libris and stamp- and poster-making. From 1970 to 1998, Kállay took part in more than a hundred exhibitions both at home and internationally.

Illustration work plays an immensely significant role in the artist's life. Among the children's books that he has illustrated, the one that became most popular and special in his eyes was Lewis Carroll's *The Adventures of Alice in Wonderland*. The illustrations to this and other books are a mosaic of creativity and inventiveness. His sporadic colouring presents the world in a visionary and imaginative way.

Dušan Kállay has received a number of awards for his work. He has become a multiple winner of the Mladé Letá Publishing award; he was awarded the BIB Golden Apple 1973 for his illustration of *Leteli sokoli nad Javorinou* [Falcons fly over Javorina] by J Horák (published in Bratislava by Mladé Letá); the BIB Golden Apple 1975 for his illustrations to O Mattson's *Rytier Roland* [Roland the knight] (published in Bratislava by Mladé Letá); and the BIB Grand Prix 1983 for his illustration of *The Adventures of Alice in*

• ***A wonderful account  
of Kállay's lifework***

• ***His illustrations are a  
mosaic of creativity and  
inventiveness***



***The work of Dušan Kállay is the ultimate expression of an absolute artistic vision and perception of the world*** :

*Wonderland*. His illustrations were also awarded the Golden Pen award in Belgrade in 1980; the IBA gold medal in Leipzig in 1982; and the Premi Internacional Catalonia d'Il·lustració in Barcelona in 1984.

He has been the Ľudovít Fulla award holder since 1983, and in 1988 he was given a Hans Christian Andersen award and later, in 1993, a BIB plaque for

his illustration of *Ein Strich zieht durch die Welt* [A line goes through the world] (by Heinz R Unger, published in Vienna by Dachs Verlag).

Dušan Kállay is justifiably considered Slovakia's most famous and internationally recognised artist. His illustrated books (including reissues and translations) come to more than two hundred titles.

The work of Dušan Kállay is the ultimate expression of an absolute artistic vision and perception of the world. It is based on an extraordinary imagination and sense of fantasy, applied in rather bizarre compositions of figures, animals and birdlife, all in a labyrinth of never-ending atypical structures knitted together and proving the playfulness and mystery of the artist at the same time. At the moment, he is working together with his wife Kamila Štanclová on a set of illustrations for a grandiose project – the Andersen stories.

For Kállay, it is not difficult to stand in the shoes of younger readers. He himself, it seems, has inwardly remained a little boy with a pure soul, full of imaginative pictures and worlds of fantasy, where everything is possible and where even the abnormal appears to be normal and natural.

On the one hand, his graphic work is characterised by multiple structures, which he uses to 'build' cathedrals and buildings originating from or based on natural motifs. Everything is complicated, maybe even a little difficult to perceive at first glance. However, on analysing the details more carefully, the spectator discovers intimate worlds of the simple figures, flora, elements of zoomorphism. Animals and insects are equal partners. They have their own clothes and attributes but also a character and expressions of feelings. There is always also an element of humour in these magic surroundings. The characters, however, are not idiotic or comic but rather sympathetic and funny. These 'moments' can be found in his graphic work, as well as in the paintings and, of course, in the illustrations.

Kállay's paintings are also in a colourful narrative style, with an emphasis on detail. Specific ideas, symbols, meanings and messages are communicated even on the surface of decorative scenes. These messages are often purposefully unfinished or portrayed just slightly. Each face is a reflection of the character's inner world. Every fragment has also a logical meaning, although it might seem, on the face of it, a pure invention of the artist's creativity.





Dušan Kállay takes the creative process very seriously, with a proper level of respect and humility. In spite of this, his work gives a rather optimistic impression, as if he spends his life playing. The life around him is his primary motivation. He sensitively perceives nature, events, circumstances, truths, thoughts, emotional squalls, loves and unkindness – as if with different eyes from the rest of us. He is both rooted in and, using fresh mediums, heading towards knowledge.

This publication is, in effect, a major documentary work on this artist, and it includes a summary bibliography of his work, his biographical details and a listing of his innumerable awards in various international and national forums. It is a summary of exhibitions presented

on various continents. It is also a presentation of private photographs, glances into his studio, fragments of his journeys, family memories, friends and common experiences. On thumbing through this book, you will feel that one life is not enough to experience it all, and respect for the artist grows with every page of thoughtful analysis turned. The reader – indeed, the viewer – of this book will have a worthwhile experience and should feel inspired. The ‘magic world’ of Dušan Kállay will captivate you.

To have this book doesn't simply mean that you have a masterpiece in your library. It means much more than that. It means you have a piece of Dušan Kállay's inner world at home; it means you have an extra human soul – to keep private or to display on your bookshelf.



*Jeffrey Garrett and Dušan Kállay at the Bologna Book Fair 2005, © Philip Stanton/Stanton Studio*

#### Omission

The authors of the material referred to in the article by Penni Cotton on the European School Education Training Course (based on the European Picture Book Collection) 2004 <http://www.ncrcl.ac.uk/eset/> in

*Bookbird* 43 (2) are as follows: Penni Cotton, Celia Keenan, Annemie Leysen, Stuart Marriott,

Margarida Morgado, Emer O'Sullivan, Romain Sahr.

*This work is based on a true incident during the civil war in Lebanon. Four children find a cork box on the beach and, along with a dog, set off for an excursion in the Mediterranean Sea. The three boys and a girl laugh with delight as ocean waves rock them in their craft. Too soon joyous adventure turns into perilous danger. A brisk wind seizes the makeshift boat and carries it far from shore. Shells start falling too close to them as they bob helplessly in the waves. For four days, frightened, hungry and thirsty, they battle a stormy sea. The dog disappears. Although the children see a ship, their red T-shirt flag fails to attract the attention of those on board. By the fourth day, the children are dehydrated and dispirited. During their ordeal, their distraught parents think their children have been kidnapped by war militias. Miraculously, all ends well, with a last-minute rescue and the earlier unlikely return of the dog, who swims to rejoin them.*

*A tense adventure story, this is suspenseful, frightening, but thrilling and made realistic through description and dialogue. Illustrations, fresh and childlike, complement the text.*

*Julinda Abu Nasr*



*Aida Naaman (Hala Andary illus)*

**AL SHATI AL SIRRI**

**[The Secret Shore]**

*Beirut: Asala 2005 36pp*

*ISBN 9953445974 (fiction, 9-12)*

Eight-year-old Grace invites readers to join her for six months of adventure as her family sets out to travel Australia, making new acquaintances among the vast country's varied population and experiencing its many wonders, both natural and human-made. No passport is needed for the trip, just keen eyes and ears and plenty of imagination. Young children accustomed to motorcar travel will readily identify with the amiable family's interactions, especially young brother Billy's recurrent query, the book's title.

Facts about Australian geographical sites such as Uluru and the Head of Bight are heard in Grace's voice and visits to zoos, beaches, cities, museums are seen through her young eyes. Colourful, detailed illustrations in ink and watercolour inform and delight. The informative illustrations are arranged together with snatches of readable text in inviting scrapbook style.

Based on the award-winning author Alison Lester's real-life travels, this is a journey, a family and a country young readers are likely to remember.

*Glenna Sloan*



**Alison Lester**

**ARE WE THERE YET?**

*Sydney: Penguin 2004 and La Jolla, CA:*

*Kane/Miller 2005 32pp ISBN 1929132735*

*(picturebook, 5-9)*

# Children's Magazines and Comics in Castilian

• This essay describes the development of the  
• publishing of children's magazines and comics  
• in Castilian, Spain's majority language,  
• during the transition from Francoism to  
• democracy and beyond. In a later article, the  
• author will deal with children's magazine  
• publishing in Spain's other co-official  
• languages: Catalan, Basque and Galician

The Franco regime (1939–75) imposed harsh restraints on intellectual expression in Spain. The activities of the regime completely obscured the intellectual brilliance of the Second Republic (1931–9) and, in the wake of the atrocities of the civil war (1936–9), which was also a war against culture and the creators of culture, Spain was plunged into a 40-year-long dark age of rationed culture under the surveillance of the fascist Catholic gaze of Francoism.

As Francoism weakened, however, a clandestine cultural resistance fed the hunger for an uncensored culture. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, this resistance opposed the cultural wasteland, and the beginnings of democratic freedoms established upon the death of Franco in 1978 and codified by the constitution ratified in that same year, meant a return to normality for the country as well as some breathing room in the cultural arena.

## ***From Francoist censorship to critical dynamism***

The legislation that regulates children's publishing started in Spain during the Franco era with the establishment by the Ministry of Information and Tourism of the order of 21 January 1952 which created the *Junta Asesora de Prensa Infantil*,

*... whose mission is to bring to this Ministry pertinent information about the orientation and general content of all periodical publications (or those meant as recreation) for children, and to promote the resolutions that this Junta deems necessary. (Larreula 1985)*

This order also established 'Standards for Children's Publishing', which ranged from a classification of readers by age groups to a table of prohibited themes for each group. For example, magazines were forbidden to talk to Spanish children about crime and suicide or to challenge or ridicule the institution of the family. Catholicism always

by XOSÉ ANTONIO NEIRA CRUZ

(translated by ROBERTA ASTROFF)



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***Children's magazines were forbidden to mention crime and suicide or to challenge or ridicule the institution of the family*** :

had to be extolled. Thus even the slightest criticisms that might transgress against the sayings of the civil, military or ecclesiastical authorities were eliminated. Language, grammar and spelling were also regulated for children's publishing.

The decree of 27 September 1962 and the order of 13 October 1962 created commissions to monitor and control children's and young adult publications, as well as to reinforce thematic censorship and morality. These resolutions remained in order until the Law of the Press and Publishing of 18 March 1966 was passed. This constituted the timid opening of a limited freedom of expression, which appears to have had no influence on children's publishing, and still

***Even language, grammar and spelling were regulated for children's publishing*** :

required the advancement of the religious, moral, political and social values that inspired 'Spanish life'. Even though this law showed a certain amount of respect toward other religious faiths, it prohibited the expounding, acceptance or encouragement of atheism or the presentation of themes that could be seen as an attack on or contempt for religious belief. In terms of language (and of course that meant only Castilian), any deviation from correct usage or any cultural or aesthetic distortion that could influence the education of young readers was forbidden.

After the death of Franco, a broader freedom of expression was reinstated, although with some specific limits, with the Royal Decree Law 24 of 1 April 1977. While this law abolished all previous decrees, it prohibited commentary or news that would put the unity of Spain into question, express contempt or scorn for the monarchy and the royal family or attack the prestige in public opinion of the armed forces.

Facing down censorship and the suppression of civil liberties was the growing dynamism of clandestine political and cultural groups opposed to Francoism, based in workers' movements, intellectual circles and even progressive movements within the Catholic church, which supplied the oxygen, so to speak, for the survival and development of minority languages such as Catalan and, to a lesser extent, Basque. In the case of Galician, the church, with few exceptions, carried out their mission of censoring and devaluing the regional language at any cost, as it had done for centuries.

Some authors – for example Enric Larreula (1985) – identify three periods that correspond to stages of access to civil liberties during this phase of active resistance and gradual opening up in the last decades of Francoism and the beginnings of the transition. Thus, in the **pre-democratic** period, the intense repression imposed by the Francoist authorities was



countered by clandestine groups with extraordinary hope and excitement in light of the apparent sclerotic condition of the Franco regime. In the **pre-autonomy** period, which comprises the years preceding the referendums that returned the Statutes of Autonomy to the historic nations of Catalonia, Galicia and the Basque country upon the death of Franco, democratic freedoms and practices were consolidated and used in defence of linguistic and cultural rights. Finally, the **ratification of the Statutes of Autonomy** and the creation of the new Spain comprising several autonomous communities guaranteed a social plurality and the harmonisation of interests among the cultural communities that coexist within the framework of the Spanish state.

### **Comic publishing in Castilian**

The beginnings of children's publishing in Castilian date back to 1798, the year in which the *Gazeta de los Niños* was born. This newspaper emerged from the European movements that supported the rise of the periodical genre, with its beginnings in the German newspaper *Der Kinderfreund* (founded in 1775 by Christian Felix Weisse), the French *L'ami des enfants* (the model for European children's publishing in this era, begun in 1782 by Arnaud Berquin) and the English *Juvenile Magazine* (which was started in 1788 by the English printer John Marshall).

There were abundant print offerings for children in Castilian in the 19th century, developed in Spain as well as in the Latin American countries, especially Mexico. After that, the first major children's publication in Castilian that enjoyed success among young readers was *TBO*, founded in 1917. It established the prototype in Spain of the comic book, to the point that this entire genre – the serial publication of illustrations with either text below the picture

or dialogue balloons – was named *tebeo* (a phonetic version of the letters 'TBO') a term accepted by the Royal Academy of the Spanish Language in 1968.

According to Salvador Vázquez de Parga (1993) two earlier publications, *Dominguín* (1915) and *Charlot* (1916), had a similar format but were not as effective as that created by printer Arturo Suárez with *TBO*, which emphasised from its very first issue its identity as a children's publication, which was the basis for its initial success. This publication appeared for many years and had to survive the changes and uncertainties that the Spanish press experienced throughout the 20th century, and so it naturally underwent various changes that can be classified as stages in its development.

### **The rise of the tebeo**

The first *TBO* consisted of eight pages with comics and some literary content. When Joaquín Buigas took over the publication, at number 10, he increased the size of the publication and reinforced the presence of serial comics, a genre that from then on continued to play a principal role in *TBO* pages. This version, accepted by most of its readers, developed during the Republic into a magazine with a print run of 220,000 copies per week. *TBO* consolidated its formula during the Franco era, in the 1940s and especially in the 1950s. The magazine's characters exemplified an epoch of contemporary Spanish history, and structured the visual literacy of generations of young readers. The adventures of the Ulises family; of Eustaquio Morcillón, king of the wild animal tamers and his assistant, Babalú; Professor Franz de Copenhagen; and the wedding of Evangelina and Cristobalín all have a place in the memory of Spaniards who learned the visual language of stories told through images well before the arrival of television.



Behind these projects, which created a true mass audience phenomenon (in the 1950s *TBO's* print run was more than 350,000 copies a week), was the work of top artists and humourists. Donaz, Manuel Urda, Serra Masana, Yorik and Ricardo Opisso (the creator in the 1920s of the company's widely known mascot, the 'TBO boy') were involved with the success of the magazine. The 1960s saw the decline of this emblematic publication, in which 'None of the changes since then have succeeded in renewing the popularity it enjoyed in other times' (Vásquez de Parga, 1993).

New magazines were started as part of the TBO line, including the very popular *DDT*, *Zipi y Zape*, *Mortadeo*, *Jaimito* and *Pulgarcito*, to mention just a few of the most well known and most important in the history of comics in Spain. These also included *El jabato* and *El Capitán Trueno*, which were aimed at a large audience of adults as well as children and young adult readers.

A heavily ideological and propagandistic line of Francoist comics series included *Maravillas* and *Flechas y Pelayos*. Scriptwriter and art critic Felipe Hernández Cava (1996) chose from the latter publication a quote notable for its crudity and transparency, put in the mouth of Julito, a boy soldier, in uniform and ill disposed toward school, who says, 'But why do I have to study, since what I want to do is kill the Reds and I don't need school for

***It is possible to trace the presence of enlightening and creative content for children in magazines published with a Fascist imprimatur*** :

that?' Nevertheless it is also possible to trace, within the panorama of cultural mediocrity and obscurantism that developed in Spain after the civil war, the presence of enlightening and creative content for children in magazines published with a Fascist imprimatur. Fresh innovative contributions by poets like Carlos Edmundo de Ory, Ángeles Amber and, above all, Gloria Fuertes appeared regularly, free of clichés and slogans, on pages otherwise marked by the indoctrinary zeal emanating from the General Secretariat of the Movement. Jaime García Padrino (1999) has studied these isolated literary efforts that risked breaking thematic and structural constraints to bring new material to children's magazines during the early stages of the Franco regime.



### **Resurgence of the tebeo**

The introduction of audiovisual media into children's leisure time meant the triumph of new entertainment forms in which periodical publications could not seem to find a place, and the *tebeos* seemed condemned to fade away. Their luck began to change in the last 20 years, basically through the revitalisation of the genre via foreign imports, sometimes already old and of poor quality, which tied in with television series and programmes that were popular among small children. Journalist José Rosell (1989), editor of the children's magazine *J-20*, notes that

*The resurgence of the tebeo in Spain appears to be a reality. While considerable effort has been put into publicity and marketing, new contributions have been rare. The tebeos of today are not very different from those of 15 years ago and in many cases are in fact comics created back then. For that reason, this whole mess could quickly find itself in the same difficulties they suffered 10 years ago: boredom and a loss of interest on the part of the reader and the difficulty of maintaining a wide array of publications that requires massive sales of over 30,000 copies per issue. Few magazines, including those for adults, can presuppose this level of sales.*

In the 1960s a group of children's and young adult publishers in Spanish organised around joint projects, a process that reproduced models already in effect in other European countries, especially France, where children's publishing has had a much more visible presence than in Spain. These editorial groups began by gathering and reorienting already existing flagship publications and worked toward getting new initiatives started. Following the schema cited by Bartolomé Crespo (1981), we can identify

### **Audiovisual media meant : the triumph of new entertainment forms in which periodical publications could not seem to find a place :**

the following organisation of children's and young adult publishing in Spain in Castilian at that time.

- Weekly established periodicals owned by the Bruguera publishing company (*Pulgarcito, Luly, Mortadelo, DDT, Jabato Color, TVO, Tio Vivo, Zipi y Zape*), all targeting a juvenile public with magazines intended to entertain. The total weekly press run Bruguera put into the Spanish market at this point reached 706,000 copies.
- Monthly flagship magazines produced by groups or people affiliated with the Catholic Church (*Juventud Misionera, J-20, Ria, El Benjamín, Aguiluchos*). Their targeted readers were children, young adults or both (depending on the title) and they intended to provide instructive entertainment. The total monthly press run reached 51,375.
- Weekly flagship magazines from Valenciana Publishers (*Jaimito, Roberto Alcazar y Pedrin* and *Pumby*). The first two were directed toward juvenile readers, while the third focused on children's literature. All were recreational in character. Their total press run reached 166,000 copies.
- The rest of the publications were: *Piñón*, (by Magisterio Español, 75,784 copies); *Motor Joven* (from Renault, a quarterly and a run of 160,000 copies); *Dumbo* (a monthly from ERSA, directed at children, with a print run of about 29,000 copies).

### *Children's publishing in Castilian today*

The latest stage of Spanish children's and young adult publishing in Castilian began in the mid-1980s and continued throughout the 1990s, and is characterised by the introduction of foreign (especially French) children's and young adult projects into the Spanish market. The entry of French children's publishing into Spain happened, as José Rosell (1989) notes, as copublications with Spanish publishing groups. This was the case in 1985

***In the last few decades  
the Spanish press has  
paid growing attention to  
its juvenile public*** :

when Ediciones SM (one of the major publishing groups for Spanish-language children's books with growing expansion into Latin America) and Bayard Press signed an agreement and created the publishing consortium SM&B Hispano Francesa Ediciones SA to launch the magazines *Caracola*, a version of the French

*Pomme d'Api*, *Leoleo*, from the French magazine *J'aime lire*, and an English-language magazine called *I Love English*, on the Spanish market. Similarly, the French publishing group Milan is now producing Castilian-language versions of its magazines *Tupí*, *Parastú* and *Wapiti* from Barcelona.

In the last few decades the Spanish press has paid growing attention to its juvenile public by publishing children's pages and supplements, generally on a weekly basis. While there are many examples, *La Oreja Verde*, a children's supplement to *La Nueva España* in Oviedo, Asturias, stands out due to its originality and longevity (it started publication on 9 April 1989), not insignificant in an industry that depends largely on the personal enthusiasm and effort of specific individuals. *La Oreja Verde*'s 500th issue, published in February 2000, is a landmark in the history of Spanish children's supplements, even more so considering the risk they were taking. Paco Abril (1998), a well-known promoter of Asturian culture, director and definitely 'Mr *La Oreja Verde*', as he is known as to the young readers of *La Nueva España*, says:

*It is very difficult to maintain a supplement like La Oreja Verde where children are active protagonists in a world where boys and girls are rarely taken into account, where everything is given to them ready-made, where they are only 'little ones,' 'school kids,' 'midgets,' or 'a market segment' (as I heard a television announcer say one day when he spoke to a group of children), but never boys and girls with a right to reap the benefits of the present and need to construct their lives.*

*That's the key: to stop talking to the children and let them present their own vision of the world. Give them creative situations so that they narrate, without any sort of roadblocks, the world of children outside of school, which is generally held to be the centre of children's lives. We have asked them to talk about that which no one ever asks them to talk about: desires, fears, discover-*





*ies, family relations, friendships, emotions, their images of themselves, personal experiences, beliefs, concepts of good and evil.... This supplement has taken it upon itself to gather for its pages, with great affection and respect, what boys and girls think about these questions that adults believe they don't think about at all. (Abril 1998)*

*La Oreja Verde*, a project in the style of the Italian writer Gianni Rodari (1920–80, winner of the 1970 Hans Christian Andersen Award), links fantasy and creativity to journalistic formats, so that the children can read interviews, letters or opinion pieces made all the more valuable to them in that the interviewees or authors are beloved characters (Cinderella, Don Quijote, Count Dracula, Mr *Oreja Verde*). These characters are so real to the child reader that they work as well in these journalistic texts as flesh and blood people would,

except perhaps the latter would be less expressive and doubtless less fascinating for the young reader.

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Striving to be as good at soccer as his father expects, Pip McLeod is constantly mortified by his parent's barracking from the sidelines. Nothing Pip does seems right and he is haunted by the sense of his inadequacy. When his English teacher dares the class to learn to juggle, Pip accepts the challenge. He juggles his life as he practises with the mandarins – school, soccer, helping his father, babysitting his little sister. He discovers a new sport – rock climbing – that he secretly makes his own, and adds that to the mix.

To be able to juggle with mandarins is a symbol of Pip's new life. He learns coordination and strength in rock climbing, he adjusts to his changing relationship with Katie, the girl next door, and he finally gains the courage to show his father his true self. Typical teenage emotions of resentment, guilt and inadequacy are explored in *JUGGLING WITH MANDARINS*, but the story is laced with humour and finishes in triumph.

This book won several awards: New Zealand Post Junior Fiction of 2004, Children's Literature Foundation of New Zealand Notable Book for 2004, and a White Raven in 2004.

Lois Huston



VM Jones

JUGGLING WITH MANDARINS

Auckland: HarperCollins 2003 255pp

ISBN 1869504623 (realistic fiction, 12+)

# The Cotsen Children's Library



••• *The Cotsen Children's Library is the historical international collection of illustrated children's books at Princeton University. Here the curator and education programmer use an 'FAQ' format to describe the work of the library*

by BONNIE BERNSTEIN  
and ANDREA IMMEL



*Bonnie Bernstein is director of education and outreach programmes at the Cotsen Children's Library*

*Andrea Immel is the curator of the Cotsen Children's Library*

**T**he Cotsen Children's Library of illustrated children's books at Princeton University in New Jersey (in the US) was established in 1994 through the generosity of Lloyd E Cotsen. The library serves scholars, the university and the local community. Its purpose is educational: to promote the study and conservation of children's books, as well as their enjoyment and appreciation.

Interactivity in our space reflects and replicates the intellectual activities of a research library, with programmes and exhibitions that interpret and make accessible for visitors of all ages some of the exceptional holdings of this particular collection. This is what makes a visit to Cotsen a truly unique experience, different from visiting a children's museum, a children's room in a public library or an art museum.

So how do we navigate between the Scylla of access and the Charybdis of preservation, and still stay friends? Read the answers to questions we get asked every day to find out.

### **Where is the Cotsen Children's Library?**

The CCL (as we call it for short) is located in Firestone Library, the hub of the Princeton University library system. On the outside, Firestone is a fine example of collegiate Gothic architecture; on the inside it can best be described as Scandinavian moderne. And then there is the Cotsen gallery, off the main floor lobby, the entrance marked by a lamp post reminiscent of the one in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.

Our doors are next to the portals of the venerable Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, of which Cotsen is a division (and, some would say, a diversion). The scope of the collection's children's books, graphics, manuscripts, original artwork and educational toys is such that its resources complement those in the Department's Scheide Library and the divisions of Graphic Arts, of Printed Books and of Manuscripts.

### **Do you have to be a Princeton student or resident to visit?**

Contrary to what you might expect, you don't need a Firestone access pass and you don't have to pass through the main security checkpoint to get to the CCL. Our gallery is free and open to visitors to the Princeton campus and to the community.

### **Excuse me, do you work here?**

The CCL has a small staff that includes the curator, an assistant to the curator, the coordinator of education and outreach programmes and several short-term project staff. Student outreach volunteers work with the programme coordinator to provide a full calendar of events and enriching

programmes for children and to facilitate scheduled visits by schools and other groups.

Although we are few in number, we wear a lot of hats. That's because we try to respond to the needs and questions of many different users – library patrons, from research fellows to desperate undergraduates researching their theses at the last minute; drop-in visitors; alumni who remember the gallery when it was the microfilm reading room; architects checking out the installation; grandparents (and some faculty) looking for ways to entertain relatives over the holidays; workshop participants, from tots to teachers; and local families who have made Cotsen their alternative family room.

### **Can my child apply for a library card?**

This is the *most* frequently asked question. The CCL is a non-circulating collection, which means we don't issue borrower's cards. The hundreds of books tucked into accessible corners and scattered about the gallery are for children and families (and the occasional undergraduate taking a study break) to enjoy during their visit. They are also used during story hours and other programmes.

### **Who bought all those books?**

Lloyd E Cotsen, a member of the Princeton class of 1950 and a former university trustee. Believe it or not, he amassed much of the children's book collection during his travels all over the world as the CEO of Neutrogena Corporation. It started out rather modestly when Mr Cotsen and his late wife JoAnne decided to create a family library for their four children. For more about Mr Cotsen's collecting adventures, read the introduction to the printed catalogue of the Cotsen Children's Library, which can be accessed online.

[http://ccl.princeton.edu/Research/e268/introduction\\_xxi.html](http://ccl.princeton.edu/Research/e268/introduction_xxi.html)

**Is Lloyd Cotsen still alive?**

Yes – alive, kicking and still shopping! Children's books are just one of the things he collects, by the way. Mr Cotsen presented a major collection of folk art to the Museum of International Folk Art in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and his magnificent collection of Japanese bamboo baskets – the largest anywhere in the world – has just been gifted to the Asian Art Museum, San Francisco, California. And about five years ago he started a new collection of textiles.

**Can we go up there?**

This question is always accompanied by a finger pointing up at the 'Wall of Books', the three storeys of visible storage where can be seen thousands of books and a raffish crew of large stuffed animals, including a life-sized sheep named Baasheba (presented to the CCL on October 30 1997, the day its doors opened to the public).

The 'Wall of Books' is one of the CCL's rare book stacks and only staff have access. So the answer to children and other curious booklovers is, 'Sorry, but the stacks are closed.'

The books, however, are available to qualified readers. Readers should establish that there are materials relevant to their project, then register in the Department of Rare Books. At the moment, CCL's holdings are in a local database, while nearly 100,000 bibliographic records in over 40 world languages are being downloaded in stages to Princeton's online catalogue over the next few years. Until that project is completed and the holdings can be searched over the web, we recommend that readers consult a member of the curatorial staff in advance of their visit. For contact information, go to the Cotsen webpage.

*[http://cotsen.princeton.edu/about/e230/library\\_staff.html](http://cotsen.princeton.edu/about/e230/library_staff.html)*

**The books don't seem to be in any order. How are they organised?**

That's because they're not arranged by author or by classification number. They are shelved in accession number order, which provides an interesting picture of how the collection has grown over the years. One of the reasons for doing this is that the collection grew so large, so fast it would have been necessary to rearrange the stacks top to bottom every time Mr Cotsen transferred material from Los Angeles to Princeton. Sometimes there's enough material to fill an eighteen-wheeler – and that's no exaggeration!

**Can we climb the tree?**

A tree 'grows' in Cotsen and sometimes kids *do* shimmy up it, but they're not supposed to! The Cotsen tree is a giant fibreglass bonsai tree in the back that's visible from the gallery doors. It dominates 'Bookscape', Princeton's most enchanting reading room. 'Bookscape' looks like something that might have sprung from an illustration by Colin Thompson or Chris Van Allsburg. It is the dream-child of the Pennsylvania architect James Bradberry and built to his unlikely specifications by Judson Beaumont of Straight Line Designs in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Visitors enter 'Bookscape' through a garden of topiary animals (they're made of Bondo, like your car bumper). From there, the room unfolds in a succession of cutaway views and whimsically furnished nooks to read books in. In the 'house', there's a stairway of 'books' with titles like *Just So Stories*, *Never Never Land on Pennies a Day* and *Rumpelstiltskin's Big Book of Baby Names* (we had way too much fun inventing them all). The stairs lead to a loft behind the 'Hearth of Darkness'. Beyond is a wishing well, in which one or two small readers can snuggle, and the towering bonsai, hollowed out for an entire family. Famous characters like Frog and Toad, Eeyore, and Eloise

have carved their names into the tree's trunk for posterity. At the rear of the gallery is the space designed for workshops and programmes, including productions by the Cotsen Players.

### **Can my class see the manuscript for one of Edward Lear's nonsense alphabets?**

Well, these are very valuable and fragile, so probably not, but we do like to offer visitors a peep into the collection, so we mount several small shows a year in the gallery's entry way. By 2006, our virtual visitors will also be able to see some of our favourite shows in the exhibitions area on the web page: 'Lower the Lights: Magic Lantern Shows in Children's Books', 'Water Babies: Swimming in Children's Books', 'Creepy-Crawly People: Insects in Children's Books' and 'Don't Go into Mr. McGregor's Garden: The Dangerous World of Beatrix Potter'. There are also plans to digitise some of the CCL's manuscript material.

### **Do you have any programmes?**

Do we ever! The CCL is a popular venue for a wide array of public programmes presented by Cotsen staff, student volunteers and local artists. *The Picture Book Press* newsletter goes to 900 families announcing current programmes and events, and we post the information on our webpage. In the past year alone, more than 6000 children and adults have participated in the following activities:

#### ***For the youngest visitors ...***

- Preschoolers attended weekly story hours led by undergraduates and a series of environmental programmes called Nature Inside Out (kids come *inside* Cotsen for a nature talk and read-aloud, then head *out* for a short hike on campus).
- They attended a production of *The Tailor of Gloucester*, performed by our own Cotsen Players.

#### ***For older children ...***

- Young storytellers learned the art of *kamishibai*, Japanese for 'paper theatre'. We hosted story hours in a dozen languages as part of our ongoing series of 'Stories in Many Languages', and held an election-year Children's Caucus for middle schoolers. To celebrate the 100th anniversary of Einstein's 'miracle year,' in which Princeton's most illustrious former resident published his Theory of Relativity, student volunteers studying maths, physics and engineering presented an 'Einstein Exploratorium' for families.





- The Cotsen Critix, ages 9–13, wrote children’s book reviews under pseudonyms like Wind-Rider and Moridin for the Cotsen webpage. The Critix met monthly with their Princeton student editors, arriving in character to a literary salon or posing as antagonists on the set of a talk show dubbed, ‘Antagonize Me!’
- Middle-schoolers participated in Crossroads Café, a book group facilitated by undergraduates that met in various coffee houses on and off campus to discuss contemporary coming-of-age-novels set in cultures around the world. Research fellows, international students and faculty took part in discussions that touched on their areas of expertise.
- With the Princeton University Art Museum and Historical Society of Princeton, we offered ‘A Day in Princeton’ field trips, presenting workshops that introduced students in the upper elementary grades to the concept of material culture, and to the primary resources and methods that historians use to learn about the past. At Cotsen, they did the work of archivists, examining the letters and journal writings of a young girl who visited Princeton in the 19th century.
- The Art Museum’s spring exhibition of rubbings from the Wu Family Shrines was inspiration for a Cotsen workshop in which participants reconstructed the Confucianist world view using images and stories from the shrine. The museum and Cotsen together staged an outdoor festival celebrating the arts of East Asia for families returning for reunions.
- In response to the Indian Ocean tsunami, Cotsen volunteers launched a community-wide effort called ‘Making Waves’, in which groups on and off campus folded origami waves to remember victims of the disaster and raise funds to help their communities rebuild. The project

had its genesis in one of our new Young Artisan workshops, presented by talented middle-school crafters for younger children. This year kids have taught kids how to fold origami, do needle-felting, and use Eric Carle's painted paper collage technique to illustrate their own books.

### *And for grownups ...*

- With Princeton's programme in teacher preparation, the CCL sponsors a series of workshops for teachers and specialists. This year's offerings included an off-site workshop titled, 'Field Guide to Your School Yard', in which we used the media centre and campus of a local elementary school to demonstrate how to use children's books and the outdoors to teach about the environment.
- In addition to public programmes, the CCL organises academic conferences that focus on various aspects of children's literature and culture. Subjects of past conferences have included Struwwelpeter's reception in America, literary fairy tales, childhood in early modern Europe, innovations in pedagogy during the late eighteenth century, and the representation of war in children's literature. This November, we are hosting a conference, 'Hidden but Not Forgotten: The Legacy of Hans Christian Andersen in the Twentieth and Twenty-first Centuries', in honour of the bicentenary of Andersen's birth. The programme will include papers, film screenings, storytelling, and an exhibition, 'Wonderful Stories for Pictures: Hans Christian Andersen and His Illustrators'. Information about the conference is available on the Cotsen webpage

*(<http://cotsen.princeton.edu/research/e347/conferences.html>)*

### **Can we rent the gallery for birthdays?**

Sorry, no private parties in 'Bookscape'! Our gallery and conference room spaces are dedicated to library use only. Occasionally we co-host programmes, receptions or events with other campus entities and local institutions, such as the Friends of the Princeton University Library, student service organizations and the Historical Society of Princeton. And then there are the 'after hours' rehearsals of the Cotsen Players.

We would use the conference room for scheduling seminars during the academic year, but then where would we process transfers of material from the donor?

### **How do I get on the mailing list?**

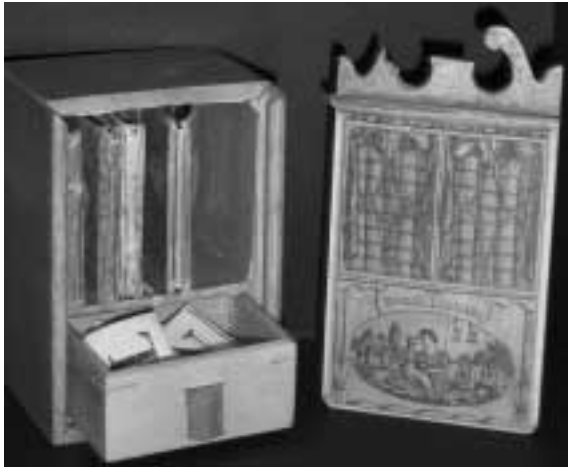
Which mailing list do you have in mind? We have several so that it's possible to target the interests of our various constituencies. Parents from the local community can put their children on the Family Mailing List to receive the newsletter and other programme announcements. Teachers and specialists can add their names to the K-12 Educators Mailing List to receive announcements about school visitation and workshops. Researchers and other people interested in attending the annual academic conference can put themselves on the Curator's Mailing List. You can do this when you visit the gallery or submit a form on the Cotsen website.

### **What's your favourite book?**

That's like asking which is your favourite child...

### **Okay, then, what's the oldest book?**

The oldest items in the collection aren't books, but clay tablets made by children learning to write 4000 years ago in ancient Sumeria. They incised wedge-shaped syllabic signs known as cuneiform script with a wooden or reed stylus.



### What's the most valuable book in the collection?

That's classified information! One of the CCL's greatest treasures is the first edition of Perrault's fairy tales published in Paris by Claude Barbin in 1697 (the headpiece for 'Cendrillon' is reproduced in our publication *Cinderella in the Cotsen Children's Library*, which is free to gallery visitors). Then there's a cache of over twenty picture letters by Beatrix Potter, including the story 'Nip and the Chocolate', which she wrote for Winifred Warne in 1906 but never revised for publication. If you come to the gallery, pick up the facsimile we issued in 2004. Another of the CCL's unique volumes is a splendid scrapbook made by Hans Christian Andersen. It's too big a book to reproduce as a gallery giveaway, but we do have an Andersen souvenir: *Little Rhymes by Hans Christian Andersen, Little Photos by Harald Paetz*, a facsimile of the very rare book of photographs of children with captions by Andersen. Although our treasures can't be on permanent display, we hope these publications are a charming alternative to viewing them under glass.

### Do you sell books too?

The CCL distributes via its webpage those publications issued by the Cotsen Occasional Press which relate to the history of children's books

and children's material culture. Three titles on the backlist are *Virtue by Design*, a survey of modern Chinese children's literature by Don J Cohn, *The Dawn of Wisdom*, a study of Japanese children's books by Ann Herring, and Jill Shefrin's *Neatly Dissected*, an essay on the history of the jigsaw puzzle. All three are lavishly illustrated in colour. Our newest publication is *Readers in the Cotsen Children's Library*, available in paper or bound in Japanese silk. To see the entire backlist or to place an order, visit the webpage.

<http://cotsen.princeton.edu/research/e232/publications.html>

**I'm trying to find a copy of this book I really liked as a child, but I can't recall the title or the author's name. It was green, about this big, and I think the main character was a dog named Coco. No, I don't remember what kind of dog it was. Do you have it?**

This is probably the second most frequently asked question. We have pretty good luck answering puzzlers like this one because the bibliographic records for the CCL's books have extensive contents notes and subject access points. We try to give everything, including modern picture-books, full-dress treatment, so it's possible to zero in on a wide range of materials across time and over international borders when patrons pose us questions about children's books or we're hard at work on an exhibition or a publication.

### So, how do I get to your webpage again?

The Cotsen webpage resides on the Princeton University server. Our site features a calendar of events, updated daily; visitor information; programme descriptions and scrapbooks; articles by scholars who have used the Cotsen collection; photographs of Bookscape, and children's book reviews by our own Cotsen Critix (ages 9–13).

<http://cotsen.princeton.edu>



The author explores the life of an African adolescent girl caught in the web of her continent's HIV/AIDS pandemic. When her mother falls ill, Chanda speaks out about HIV/AIDS and stands up to her elders to make a courageous and risky move to ensure her mother dies at home in peace and with dignity. In performing these actions, she breaks the shame, silence and secrecy that shroud the diseases and the families of those suffering from them.

With its admirable and brave protagonist, showing hope even in the face of tragedy, Stratton's story is powerful, moving and inspirational. He is one of two Canadian children's authors who have addressed this subject. (The other is Deborah Ellis whose *THE HEAVEN SHOP* was reviewed in *BOOKBIRD* 43 (2).) Both authors are to be commended for drawing attention to a topic which might not have received as much press coverage in Canada and the USA as it warrants.

Proceeds from the sale of *CHANDA'S SECRETS* assist organisations working to improve the lives of Africans living with HIV/AIDS; royalties from Ellis's book go to UNICEF.

Carol-Ann Hoyte



Allan Stratton

## CHANDA'S SECRETS

Toronto: Annick Press 2004 193 pp  
ISBN 1550370341 (fiction, 12+)

This book won the JBBY Greek prize in 2004 in the books for intermediate readers category. Its plot involves a community of animals and forest creatures. These characters are upset because their good friend, Dorothy Snot the caterpillar, has disappeared. They decide to ask the wise squirrel Cornelius Crick and his assistant Martha the firefly, to take on the case. Cornelius Crick, putting into practice the infallible detective methods of Agatha Christie's Hercule Poirot, solves the mystery. Crick eventually presents a changed Dorothy, now wearing red wings, to her astonished friends. This inventive, well-structured, thoroughly enjoyable detective story for children is illustrated with brio and imagination.

Vassiliki Nika



Petros Chatzopoulos

(Despina Karapanou illus)

## I exafanisi tis Dorothy Snot

[Whatever Happened to Dorothy Snot?]

Athens: Patakis 2003 176pp

ISBN 9601607137 (fiction 9-12)

# The Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award 2005

by MARIA NIKOLAJEVA

and ULLA RHEDIN



*Maria Nikolajeva is a professor of literature at Stockholm University and a member of the ALMA jury*

*Ulla Rhedin, who holds a PhD in literature, is a writer, critic and lecturer and a member of the ALMA jury*



••• *The Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award is the world's largest prize in the field of children's literature, and the second largest literary award in the world after the Nobel Prize.*  
••• *This article briefly introduces the award and outlines the work of its two most recent (2005) winners, the Japanese illustrator Ryôji Arai and the British writer Philip Pullman*

**T**he Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award (ALMA) was founded by the Swedish government in 2002 to commemorate Astrid Lindgren, the best-loved Swedish author and one of the most popular children's writers in the world. The official purpose of the award is to celebrate the world's best writing and illustration for children and most successful reading-promotion activities, and the most significant side-effect of the award over its first three years has been that it has raised the status of and respect for children's literature. 'Can it be so good that it's worth five million?' people ask, awed by the sum. (Five million kroners is worth about half a million euro.)

The award is given for a lifetime's achievement and may be bestowed on one or more children's writers, illustrators, storytellers or reading-promoters, and it may be made to individuals or to an organisation. The winner is selected by a jury of twelve, and nominations are accepted from all the countries in the world. According to the rules governing the award, the winner must show 'the highest artistic quality and evoke the deeply humanistic spirit that Astrid Lindgren treasured'. This requirement makes the jury's work difficult, and it is a significant effort to make a fair judgement on over a hundred nominees from several dozen countries, cultures and languages.

Christine Nöstlinger and Maurice Sendak won the award jointly in 2003 and Lygia Bojunga won it in 2004. This year's joint award-winners are Ryôji Arai and Philip Pullman.

## Ryôji Arai – a Poet in Colour

The jury's reasons for giving Ryôji Arai the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award for 2005 were as follows:

*Ryôji Arai is an illustrator with a style all of his own: bold, mischievous and unpredictable. His picture books glow with warmth, playful good humour and an audacious spontaneity that appeals to children and adults alike. In adventure after adventure, colour flows through his hands in an almost musical way. As a medium for conveying stories to children, his art is at once genuine and truly poetic, encouraging children to paint and to tell their own stories. ([www.alma.se](http://www.alma.se))*

Some years ago a jury member who was browsing through the catalogue of the Bologna Children's Book Fair, looking for interesting illustrators, was hooked by a picture from the Japanese picturebook *Nazo nazo no tabi* [A journey of riddles] (1998), which won the 1999 Special Award at Bologna. This was how Ryôji Arai first came to the notice of a broader Western public with his fabulous pictures to the text by Chihiro Ishizu. One picture in particular, showing the moon sitting in the darkness of an exotic world, inspired the jury to go deeper into the magnificent universe of this playful, warm, humorous and genuinely naïve illustrator.

Since his first picturebooks in the late 1980s, Arai has collaborated with highly regarded Japanese poets, and he has also written his own philosophical and poetic stories. As a collaborator in any picturebook team, he tends to take responsibility for giving the stories space, rhythm, melody, warmth and colour, using beautiful

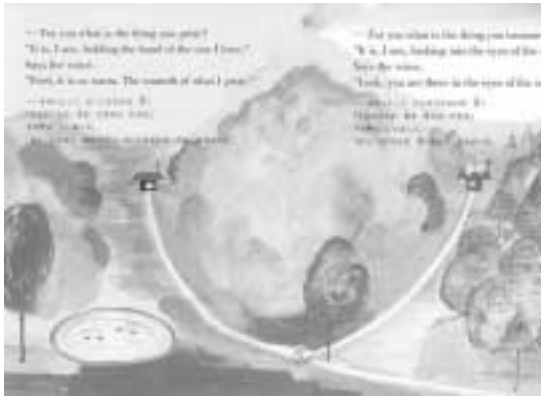
• ***The magnificent universe***  
 • ***of this playful, warm,***  
 • ***humorous and genuinely***  
 • ***naïve illustrator***



**Select Arai bibliography**

*Basu ni notte* [Waiting for the bus] (1992) Tokyo: Kaisei-sha  
*Hajimari, hajimari* [Performance, performance!] (1994) Tokyo:  
 Bronze Shinsha  
*Nazo nazo no tabi* [A journey of riddles] (1998) (text by Chihiro  
 Ishizu) Tokyo: Froebel-kan  
*Mori no ehon* (1999) / *A Forest Picture Book* (2001) (text by Hiroshi  
 Osada) Tokyo: Kodansha

scenery, as in, for example, *Mori no Eho* (1999) (*A Forest Picture Book* 2001). Here the well-known Japanese poet Hiroshi Osada tells a transparent story in which the voice of an invisible person is asking questions of a likewise invisible 'I'. With his experience of stage art, Arai creates theatrical settings where the narrator encounters beautiful scenery, vibrant with atmosphere and love. In one double-page spread where 'I', in turn, asks the voice: 'What is the thing you prize?' the answer is: 'holding the hand of the one I love'. In the picture, Arai, in his own creative way, shows how two small houses, one with a girl's hair-ribbon, manage to hold hands around the whole forest.



However, Arai prefers to tell his own picturebook stories, as he told the audience at a seminar in Stockholm in May 2005. The conception of a story takes its time, but when he at last applies his brush to paper he is a fast painter: a week or so is enough. His narratives are always directed to the child addressee and, following his conviction that most adults only perceive the text, he often gives his pictures deeper meanings, as in the recent *Happi-san* [Happy] (2003), where tiny tanks crowd around in the colourful backgrounds, and where the homes of the protagonists are destroyed. Although this book was conceived directly after the US invasion of Iraq, it does not tell a strictly political, but a more general philosophical and allegorical story about helping each other to find our way to peace with ourselves.

Addressing the Japanese child, as well as urban children all over the world, Arai wants to emphasise the senses, the emotions, the deeper qualities in life. Take your time, he seems to be saying in several of his works, take it easy, be calm, look around, see the beauty around you, do not hurry, life is beautiful, love and peace to everyone! He demonstrates this non-hysterical way of looking at life in his books with their

***Take your time, he seems  
 to be saying, take it easy,  
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 see the beauty around  
 you, do not hurry, life is  
 beautiful, love and  
 peace to everyone!***

utterly spontaneous, nonsensical plots: no large movements, no big conflicts but rather waiting, strolling around, empty space and silence. Take a look at *Basu ni notte* [Waiting for the bus] (1992), where a boy is waiting for the bus in an almost empty landscape. The artist, wanting to ‘dramatise’ the horizon, has chosen desert-like surroundings, where he lets the world appear in front of the passively waiting boy at the bus stop. Huge trucks, motorcycles, horses, musicians, dancers pass by in an almost dreamlike way, and night falls. When the bus finally arrives the next day, it is overcrowded. Arai spends six pictures on the bus, large ones on its arrival and departure in clouds of dust, and a tiny, narrow one on its short stop – all progressing in an almost filmic way. In the last picture the boy is seen wandering away with his heavy load on his back.



His most original and personal picturebook – and also his own favourite – is *Hajimari, hajimari* [Performance, performance!] (1994), where a theatre, called ‘Performance, Performance’, arrives out of the darkness, shouting ‘Performance, performance!’ An ‘I’ appears on the



stage, a man performing different scenes: dancing, swimming, playing with a dog. In a central sequence 'I' as a grown-up artist paints a big picture together with himself as a five-year-old boy: both are wearing white sombreros, both are left-handed, both are painting trucks, trains and animals – but in different styles, due to their difference in age and skill-levels.

Ryôji Arai confesses that he never liked school;

he preferred staying at home pretending to be busy by drawing straight lines on pieces of paper. He still loves playing football and climbing trees, he told us in Stockholm, where he chose to watch a local football match and work with children rather than visit embassy parties and the Swedish parliament. He plays in a music band and he doesn't like Manga. He was born in Yamagata in 1956 and now lives in Tokyo.

## More to Philip Pullman than 'His Dark Materials'

The jury's citation of their reasons for giving Philip Pullman the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award for 2005 goes as follows:

*Philip Pullman is a master storyteller in a number of genres – from historical novels and fantasy to social realism and highly amusing parodies. With inventiveness, linguistic brilliance and psychological insight he creates and explores his own worlds without losing focus on here and now. Through his strong characters he stands firmly on the side of young people, ruthlessly questioning authority and proclaiming humanism and the power of love whilst maintaining an optimistic belief in the child even in the darkest of situations. (www.alma.se)*

Pullman is best known around the world as the author of the magnificent fantasy trilogy 'His Dark Materials', comprising *Northern Lights* (1996), *The Subtle Knife* (1997) and *The Amber Spyglass* (2000). Most of the scholarly work devoted to Pullman is focused on this trilogy (Gribbin and Gribbin 2003; Hunt and Lenz 2001; Lenz and Scott 2005; Squires 2003), as are the numerous conference presentations and student papers. The ALMA jury, however, emphasised Pullman's multifaceted talent (see also Tucker 2003), and it is around the statements in the jury's citation that this brief presentation is built.

Pullman is indeed a great master of plot, with appropriate cliffhangers, foreshadowing, false threads, suspense and unpredictable endings. His stories in all the genres he employs – from parodies of fairy tales, ghost stories and fantasy to historical and contemporary novels – are dynamic in their plot structure. Pullman himself speaks of historical thrillers, while his brilliant teenage novel in a contemporary setting, *The White Mercedes* (1992; later released as *The Butterfly Tattoo*), starts with this breathtaking clause: 'Chris Marshall met the girl he was going to kill on a warm night in early June ...'. Pullman knows exactly how to catch the reader's atten-

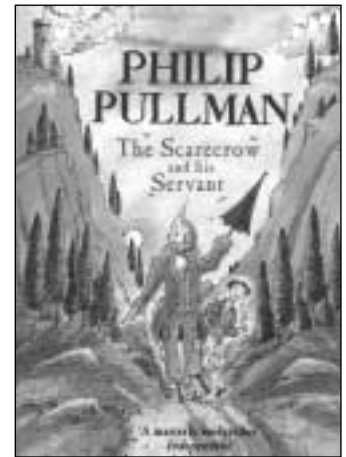


tion, whether it is with an image such as Lyra eavesdropping on the Oxford scholars, or a confused boy claiming he used to be a rat, or the seemingly more traditional but highly ironic opening: ‘A thousand miles ago, in a country east of the jungle and south of the mountains, there lived a Firework-Maker ...’ (from *The Firework-Maker’s Daughter*). He has even managed to recycle the centuries-old figure of an animated scarecrow, using it for a hilarious Quixotic adventure with many philosophical overtones. All this undoubtedly shows Pullman’s inventiveness, and the beginning already quoted, ‘A thousand miles ago ...’

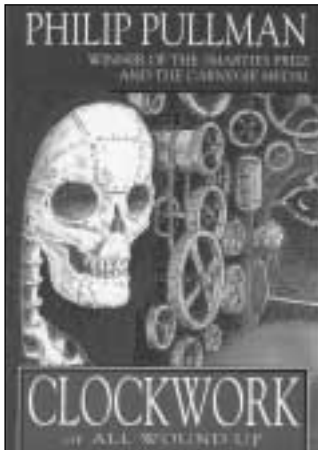
is an example of his highly individual style and ingenious play with language, which is especially prominent in the trilogy, where electricity in the parallel world is called ‘anbaric light’ and quantum physics is ‘experimental theology’. It is partly through language that Pullman creates and explores his own exciting and mystifying worlds, familiar and yet strange. These worlds are not only alternative universes, as in ‘His Dark Materials’, but include for example the romantic Victorian venues of the Sally Lockhart quartet and *Thunderbolt’s Waxworks* (1994), the scary medieval atmosphere of *Clockwork* (1996) and the pseudo-Italian landscape of *The Scarecrow and his Servant* (2004).

It would seem, from what has been said, that Pullman shuns the complex world of his own young contemporaries coping with everyday dilemmas as well as global issues; yet even in the wildest fantasy, the here-and-now is never far away. Together with Lyra, readers learn about their own reality as it is reflected in exotic otherworlds; history is just another mirror of today; and Pullman’s spooky, fairy-tale environments are easily translatable into recognisable situations. In the first place, electrifying plots notwithstanding, Pullman’s primary concern is with character. And his characters, often orphans and the underprivileged – Pullman has explained, on TV, why orphans are indispensable in fiction for young readers – are strong-minded and strong-willed, yet never straightforwardly good or still less ideal. As often as not, Pullman’s protagonists are young girls, and those who are so far only familiar with Lyra can look forward to meeting the irresistibly charming female picaro Sally from *The Ruby in the Smoke* (1985) and sequels, or Lila the Fire-Maker’s daughter, and not least the contemporary adolescent Ginny of *The Broken Bridge* (1990), whose search for ethnic identity is merely one ingredient in her complicated growing up. Pullman’s characters are never flat and predictable; they amaze, they show their many sides, while the author demonstrates remarkable psychological insight, even

• **Highly individual style**  
 • **and ingenious play with**  
 • **language**



• **If one can speak of any**  
 • **ideology permeating**  
 • **Pullman’s work then it is**  
 • **the interrogation of all**  
 • **authority**



**Select Pullman bibliography**

- The Ruby in the Smoke* (1985) Oxford: Oxford University Press – first novel in the Sally Lockhart quartet  
*The Broken Bridge* (1990) London: Macmillan  
*The White Mercedes* (1992) London: Macmillan  
*Thunderbolt's Waxworks* (1994) New York: Viking  
*The Firework-Maker's Daughter* (1995) London: Doubleday  
*Northern Lights* (1995) London: Scholastic / *The Golden Compass* (1996) New York: Knopf  
*Clockwork, or All Wound Up* (1996) London: Doubleday  
*The Subtle Knife* (1997) London: Scholastic  
*I was a Rat!* (1999) London: Doubleday  
*The Amber Spyglass* (2000) London: Scholastic/David Fickling  
*The Scarecrow and his Servant* (2004) London: Doubleday

though the character may be detached by time, space, age, gender, race or non-human nature (as the rat and the scarecrow).

If one can speak of any ideology permeating Pullman's work – and he has promptly denied any 'meaning' or 'intention' in his books ([www.philip-pullman.com](http://www.philip-pullman.com)) – then it is the interrogation of all authority, which makes him such an obvious soulmate of Astrid Lindgren's. Unlike his many colleagues, he consciously writes *for* young people, but he also writes *of* young people, on their behalf, firmly taking their part in any conflict with the adult establishment. The adults in Pullman's books are not portrayed in an attractive manner: they are unreliable, ambiguous, sometimes treacherous. Yet, paradoxically, growing up is not presented as undesirable, and in the darkest of his plots, Pullman maintains his belief in the child – not as a symbol of innocence and ignorance, as so many children's writers before him, but as a bearer of more profound knowledge, as a vessel of joy and life.

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## DENMARK

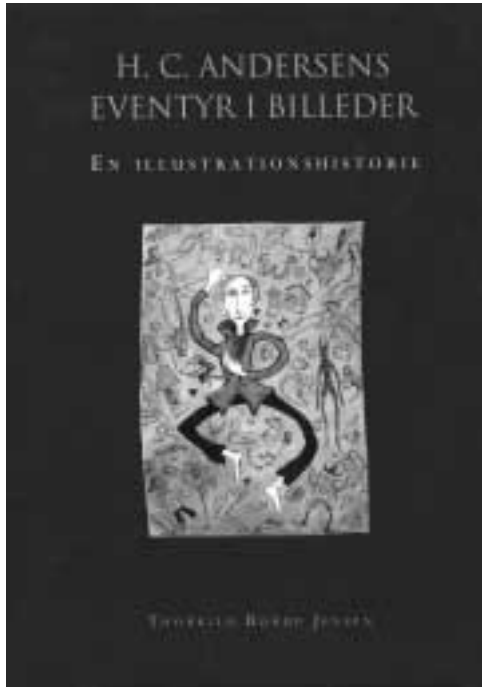
THORKILD BORUP JENSEN

***H. C. Andersens eventyr i billeder: en illustrationshistorie***

[H C Andersen's fairy tales in pictures: A history of illustration]

(Series: 'University of Southern Denmark Studies in History and Social Sciences' 289)

Odense: Syddansk Universitetsforlag 2005 292pp ISBN 8778389313 DKK 349.00



Pretty well every ambitious illustrator has taken up the challenge of illustrating fairy tales by Hans Christian Andersen. These fairy tales have continued to inspire artists for centuries, and this justifies the subtitle 'history of illustration' of this extensive study of more than a hundred international illustrators.

Jensen attempts to master this vast pictorial cosmos by focusing on eighteen fairy tales. Instead of taking a chronological approach, he demonstrates the various stylistic differences in historical and modern editions following the development of the plot. This series of examples is introduced by an essay on Andersen's concept of imagery and accompanied by two highly revealing 'artist's statements' by the Danish illustrators Ib Spang Olsen and Lilian Brøgger about their view of the art of illustrating – not just Andersen but books in general. In the concluding essay about the impact of fairy-tale illustration, Jensen outlines his own position concerning the possibilities of illustrations.

Every selection can be criticised. In this case one might regret that interpretations that go way beyond the original narrative – like Jörg Müller's *Der standhafte Zinnsoldat* [The steadfast tin soldier] (1996), for example – are excluded, while plain or even trivial examples are treated alongside masterpieces on the same level. But on the other hand it is impossible to take everyone and everything into account. Overall, this case study of illustrating Andersen fairy tales offers a broad overview of the vast possibilities of interpretation through illustration.

*Andreas Bode*

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 • Submissions of recent books and book announcements for inclusion in this section are welcome. Please cite titles in the original language as well as in English, and give ISBN, price and other ordering information if available. Brief annotations may also be sent, but please no extensive reviews.

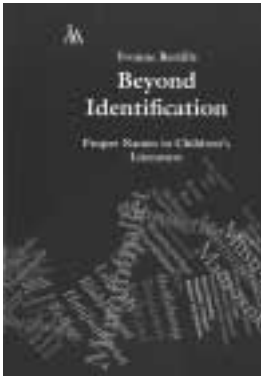
• Send submissions to Barbara Scharioth, Internationale Jugendbibliothek, Schloss Blutenburg, D-81247 München, Germany.  
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## FINLAND

YVONNE BERTILLS

***Beyond Identification: Proper Names in Children's Literature***

Åbo: Åbo Akademis Förlag 2003 V + 280pp  
 ISBN 9517651244 €24.00



In her doctoral dissertation, the Finnish scholar Yvonne Bertills deals with proper names of anthropomorphic characters in fantasy books for children. In chapters 2 to 4 of her comprehensive study she introduces

her theoretical framework, stressing the onomastic, semantic and narrative concerns.

After establishing her main focus of discussion – that is to say, the formation and semantic content of proper names, their role in literary texts, and their specific function in children's literature – the author provides a detailed analysis of three writers' works: Tove Jansson's Moomin books written in Swedish (1945–70), which she compares with the English children's classics *Winnie-the-Pooh* (1926) and *The House at Pooh Corner* (1928) by AA Milne and with Mauri Kunnas's Finnish Koiramäki picture-books (1980–8).

In the third part of her dissertation (chapter 8), Bertills briefly examines the difficulties and challenges that arise when translating proper names. This interdisciplinary study provides an interesting contribution to the debate on names and naming within the discourse of children's literature.

*Claudia Söffner*

## FRANCE

DANIEL MAJA

***Illustrateur jeunesse: comment créer des images sur les mots?***

[Children's book illustrator: How do you create images to go with words?] (Series: 'La littérature jeunesse, pour qui, pour quoi?')

Paris: Éd. du Sorbier 2004 171pp ISBN 2732038288 €13.00



Is it possible to faithfully 'translate' a text into pictures? That is what French journalist and illustrator Daniel Maja sets out to discover in this book of six chapters. The author begins by defining the term 'illustration' and look-

***Is it possible to :  
 faithfully 'translate' :  
 a text into pictures? :***

ing at the relationship between text and image. These reflections are followed by a presentation of the major illustration techniques and a concise history of children's book illustration. In the last two chapters Maja recounts his own professional development and explains his way of working. Maja proposes a definition of the picture within the picturebook as 'narrative image', inviting readers to dream. This title, however, is conceived as a practical handbook for picturebook-lovers. This lends it a universal character despite the predominantly French examples.

*Elena Kilian*

## ITALY

HAMELIN ASSOCIAZIONE CULTURALE AND BOLOGNA  
CHILDREN'S BOOK FAIR (ED)

***Illustrare Andersen = Illustrating Andersen*** (Series: Immagini e documenti)

Bologna: Istituto per Beni Artistici Culturali e Naturali della Regione Emilia-Romagna  
(et al) 2005 175pp ISBN 8849124376 €30.00 (Italian and English text)



The 200th anniversary of Hans Christian Andersen's birthday has produced a true flood of publications about the Danish author and innumerable new editions of his texts – much to the heart's content of Andersen aficionados. A publication that deserves special mention is the catalogue to the exhibition *Illustrare Andersen = Illustrating Andersen* shown at the 2005 Bologna book fair, which documents various facets of Andersen illustrations.

The first section 'The Emperor's New Illustrations' presents laureates of the prestigious Hans Christian Andersen Award who have illustrated Andersen's texts: Ib Spang Olsen, Mitsumasa Anno, Robert Ingpen, Dušan Kállay, Lisbeth Zwerger, Květa Pacovská, Jörg Müller, Anthony Browne and Quentin Blake. These are followed by a number of new fairy-tale illustrations selected by the international jury for the annual illustration competition of the Bologna Book

Fair. The artists – many of whom are still at the beginning of their career – were asked to send in illustrations to Hans Christian Andersen's texts along with original art work of recently published books.

The third section features comic-like illustrations created by young artists for an Italian Andersen edition entitled *L'ombra e altri racconti* published by Orecchio Acerbo (Rome 2005). According to Antonio Faeti, these illustrations reveal 'the true Andersen behind the unadulterated stories. They skilfully capture this aloof melancholic figure and his inimitable genius for distilling all the ills of the world into a simple box of matches. This Andersen would certainly have approved of his modern illustrators.'

The catalogue closes with references to notable new illustrated editions of Hans Christian Andersen's work and an insightful study by Antonio Faeti, 'I volti del narrare = The faces behind the stories', looking at a series of historical and contemporary portraits of Andersen.

*Barbara Scharioth*

## JAPAN

NIHON JIDŌ BUNGAKU GAKKAI (ED)

***Jidō bungaku kenkyū no gendaishi: Nihon Jidō Bungaku Gakkai no 40nen***

[Contemporary history of scholarship in children's literature: Japan Society for Children's Literature 1962–2002]

Tokyo: Komine Shoten 2004 476+17pp

ISBN 4338010258 JPY 6000.00



This edition marks the 40th anniversary of the Japan Society for Children's Literature, a learned society for scholars in children's literature with more than 430 members. In the first section, leading experts

present the history of scholarship in Japanese and international children's literature, starting from 1945. The second part documents the society's early years and subsequent development. Accomplished members look back on their experiences within the society and its contributions to children's and young adult literature. The third section features various reports on the annual bulletin and scholarly publications, conferences, awards, etc. A full index of all research articles published in the bulletin and an extensive bibliography of secondary literature is included at the end.

Even though this documentation cannot offer a comprehensive overview of Japanese scholarship in children's literature, it will certainly prove a useful guide and reference tool to students and scholars alike. It may also tempt international scholars to join members of the society in one of their many research projects.

*Fumiko Ganzenmüller*

## THE NETHERLANDS

PETER VAN DEN HOVEN

***Het goede en het mooi: de geschiedenis van Kris-Kras*** [The good and the beautiful: the history of Kris-Kras]

Leidschendam: Biblion Uitgeverij 2004 251pp

ISBN 905483529X €15.50



In 2004, one of the most remarkable Dutch magazines for children, *Kris-Kras*, celebrated its 50th anniversary. It was founded by the Hungarian immigrant Ilona Fennema-Zboray and published from 1954 until 1966. Based on interviews with Ilona Fennema and the publisher's archives, Peter van den Hoven reconstructs the post-war period during which important changes took place in the pedagogical and literary field that influenced the development of children's literature. The high-quality children's magazine was a springboard for talented young writers and illustrators and helped to raise the standards of children's literature in the Netherlands in general.

Peter van den Hoven's study, including a reprint of an article by the author originally published in 1981, is very well documented and can be seen as a historical document. Colour reprints of three issues of the magazine accompany the analysis of *Kris-Kras* within the context of contemporary children's literature. This book is not only for specialists interested in the history of *Kris-Kras* and its contribution to Dutch children's literature in general; it is also a beautiful and richly illustrated book that invites former readers to delve back into the world of this astonishing magazine.

*Toin Duijx*

## SPAIN

***Ilustrísimos: panorama de la ilustración infantil y juvenil en España = panorama dell'illustrazione per ragazzi in Spagna = overview of children and young adults' illustration in Spain***

Madrid: Ministerio de Cultura, Subdirección General de Publicaciones, Información y Documentación 2005 155pp  
ISBN 8481812250 €55.00 Spanish and English text



The Bologna Book Fair is not just a fixed venue for the international children's literature scene; it is also a well-established forum for international children's book illustration. Along with the traditional annual art exhibit, there is a special exhibit featuring the illustrations of a different country each year. This year, Spain was the featured guest. In collaboration with the Federation of Illustrators' Associations (Federación de Asociaciones de Ilustradores Profesionales – FADIP) the Spanish Ministry of Culture has put together an elaborately staged show offering a fascinating overview of Spain's contemporary children's book illustration. The works offer exquisite artistic quality and a wide range of techniques, styles and themes. This fabulous exhibition made you wonder why most of these innovative illustrators are still hardly known outside the Spanish-speaking world – despite the big boom in Spanish children's literature over the past three decades.

The well-designed catalogue of the exhibition presents works as well as bio-bibliographical data on 29 artists whose original art work was on display in Bologna. It comes with an attractive CD-ROM showing pictures by a further 44 artists whose work was presented at Bologna in digital form. Overall, this is a highly commendable and representative compendium of contemporary Spanish children's book illustration.

*Jochen Weber*

## SWITZERLAND

DANIÈLE HENKY

***L'art de la fugue en littérature de jeunesse: Giono, Bosco, Le Clézio, maîtres d'école buissonnière*** [Escapism in children's literature: Giono, Bosco, Le Clézio, masters of truancy] (Series: 'Recherches en littérature et spiritualité' 5)

Bern (et al): Peter Lang 2004 XIX+324pp ISBN 3039102362 €57.80



Escape has always been a key theme of young adult literature. This study goes beyond the plot to take into account the production and reception of young adult literature. Henky compares the notions of 'escapist writing' and 'escapist reading' and interprets their reciprocal influence as a driving force behind the creation of imaginary escapist worlds. The historical introduction demonstrates that even the educationalist project in the early days of children's literature, which aimed at civilising the 'little savages', was framed by journeys of initiation to engage the attention of young readers. In fact, young readers were so eager to escape that they also ventured into escapist worlds of adult literature.

The main part of the study presents close readings of the art of creating escapist worlds as practised by the three well-known French authors Jean Giono (1895–1970), Henri Bosco (1888–1976), and Jean Marie Gustave Le Clézio (b. 1940) in comparison with the children's authors Jules Verne, Michel Tournier and Lewis Carroll. In her conclusion, Henky draws parallels between the fictional journeys of initiation and the creative relationship between the writers, their 'child within' and 'the world of children'.

*Elena Kilian*

## 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. (See also p.13.) 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](mailto:bookbirdsp@oldtown.ie) AND one to [bookbirdvc@oldtown.ie](mailto:bookbirdvc@oldtown.ie)

**NB:** Please put **Bookbird submission** followed by your initials in the subject line.

*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](mailto: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).

# Focus IBBY



## IBBY's Voices in the East

At the beginning of his presidency, Peter Schneck announced that his emphasis would be on Asia and Africa, and now – thanks to his own efforts, the support of the Executive Committee and just the way things work out – that expressed desire is now starting to become a reality, giving rise to a whole new range of activities for IBBY.

As it is now well known, IBBY's tsunami collection was extremely successful. Thanks to the readiness and efficiency of Chieko Suemori and JBBY, IBBY received three major Japanese donations, allowing us to send significant amounts of money to India, Indonesia and Thailand and, moreover, to draw up a five-year plan of activities (see [www.ibby.org](http://www.ibby.org)).

We will dedicate this column to listening to the voices of our partners in the East, of IBBY's president in Japan, China and Korea, and of Jay Heale, in South Africa.

### *Murti Bunanta reports from Indonesia*

We held training courses in storytelling and using books effectively for teachers and carers from schools, orphanages and refugee camps and other places and we had about 100 participants. This was the participants' first experience of such training, and in the beginning they were a little reserved and unsure, but we managed to break the ice and very quickly the participants became enthusiastic, an enthusiasm that lasted throughout the training – and they have asked us to come back to do some more training sessions.

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Each day after lunch we went out to orphanages and camps to visit children affected by the disaster. We went through sadly devastated areas, but the children we met were wonderful and very responsive to stories. They are eager to learn English, and they often used simple English phrases (hello, thank you) as well as the usual Muslim greetings. In one of the orphanages, although they speak mostly Acehnese, they wanted me to read the stories in English.

Some of the children were still in trauma, but most of them seem tough enough and were keen to share with us their own tsunami stories. There were two earthquakes during our visit, one rather strong, but we were able to calm the children that were frightened.

### ***Nilima Sinha, president of AWIC/India BBY, reports***

On 16 May the first AWIC/Indian BBY Reading for Recovery centre was set up at the orphanage at Nagapattinam, on the Coromandel Coast of India. The books were arranged attractively, as a string library, and on two tables and a reed mat. The puppets, made by Nagraj, were displayed too. There were 62 children between ages of 3 and 15. We began by singing songs, and this was followed by the reading aloud of a story.

The children were shy at first but soon opened up. Some children were not able to read, but they liked looking at the pictures. The Tamil alphabet books were presented to them, and some children who had never possessed a book before were soon beaming with smiles.

The morning session was about books and reading. In the evening there was another session of activities with the stories read out. The kids made puppets, drew pictures and made bookmarks.

We are quite sure that when donors read these reports, they will know that their generosity got through and produced those wonderful smiles.



*Peter Schneck, Zhang Xaiolan, Chieko Suemori, Wu Shulin*

## Visit to China, Japan and Korea in May 2005

***Peter Schneck, president of IBBY, reports***

### ***China***

**Chieko Suemori**, a Japanese member of IBBY's Executive Committee, and I were welcomed in Beijing by Mr **Liu Haiqi** (vice president of CBBY), Mr **Huang Jianbin** (another IBBY EC member), Ms **Ma Weidong** (CBBY secretary general) and Mr **Zhang Mingzhou** (organizer of IBBY's 30th world congress, which will be held in Beijing in September 2006).

We travelled by train to Tianjin, where the annual China spring book fair took place this year and were welcomed by Mr **Hai Fei** (president of CBBY).

After visiting the book fair and a tour of the city, we were kindly received by Mr **Shi Zongyuan**, China's Minister of Press and Publications. He expressed his full support for the forthcoming IBBY congress and highly appreciated IBBY's proposal to hold a professional meeting between publishers who support IBBY and children's books publishers from China. It was very gratifying that Mr Shi had travelled

especially from Beijing to meet us in Tianjin. He showed great interest in the IBBY fundraising book *Under the Spell of the Moon*, and was very moved by the personal statement of Chieko Suemori expressing her concern about the struggles between Japan and its neighbours about their history as written in text books.

In preparation for the press conference related to the IBBY congress we were also received by Mr **Wu Shulin**, Vice Minister of Press and Publication and Ms **Zhang Xiaolan**, Deputy Minister of China Youth Development. Both ministers expressed their support, both during the meeting and at the following press conference. The press conference generated great interest in and expectations for the 2006 congress, and China Educational TV will start a weekly presentation of the congress. Furthermore, I was interviewed by the editors of a magazine for China's children and they me asked to write a message for publication. We were told that the congress would address 375 million children in China alone.

***The IBBY Congress in  
Beijing will address  
375 million children in  
China alone*** :

IBBY plans certain activities worldwide in order to promote the congress. Mr Hai Fei will travel to Brazil and to the United States to promote the Beijing congress, and he will also visit those countries that are China's neighbours who are not yet represented in IBBY, in order to find contact persons to invite for the congress. It is hoped that these people might also eventually be able to form IBBY sections in their own countries: Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, North Korea. I was requested to inform Mr Kang, president of KBBY about these efforts. Jella Lepman's book, *A Bridge of Children's Books*,

will be translated into Chinese and published by the All China Children's Publishing House; and the Tomorrow Publishing House plans to publish a Chinese edition of *Under the Spell of the Moon*.

### ***Japan***

In Japan, we were lucky enough to meet the former IBBY president **Tayo Shima** who agreed to speak at a plenary session of the Beijing congress on the theme of 'Art in Changing Societies – Picturebooks at the Turn of the 19th Century and during the 1920s'.

We also met Mr **Matsui**, currently president of JBBY, who is well known and deeply respected as a pioneer of cultural and publishing contacts in the whole of East Asia, and Ms **Matsuoka**, a former Andersen jury member and director of the Tokyo Children's Book Library. The meeting took place at the wonderful children's bookshop run in Ginza by the Kyobunkan.

Meeting Mr **Hideo Yamada**, who has donated 50 million yen to IBBY for the tsunami appeal, for the African Book Flood project and for other IBBY projects worldwide, was the highlight of my visit. Chieko Suemori and I were met at Okayama airport by two of Mr Yamada's assistants and driven to the Yamada bee-farm, where we joined the employees for lunch in the factory canteen. Following a guided tour of the factory, we met Mr Yamada. He agreed to the IBBY project plans that were presented to him and to the announcement of the title 'IBBY Yamada Fund' in recognition of his support.

There were lots of signs of Mr Yamada's support of IBBY in the past: a diploma presented by JBBY in recognition of his support and the book selection 'Books for Africa' are prominently displayed in the entrance lobby of the factory. It should also be noted how much Mr Yamada is involved in environmental protection:

70 per cent of all the energy used by the factory is solar energy; he also supports the town with a wind-energy plant.

Mr Yamada announced that Yamada bee farm's website will have a link to IBBY's website.

At Nissan, Chieko Suemori and I were received by Ms **Junko Kogure** and Ms **Tomoko Okada**, members of the sustainability group corporate citizenship team of Nissan. Besides the standing support to IBBY's International Hans Christian Andersen Award, Nissan is considering a substantial contribution to IBBY's tsunami appeal.

## ⋮ *Visits to Yamada, Nissan, Asahi and JBBY*

We also visited Asahi, and Chieko Suemori and I were received by Mr **Toshiyuki Takagi**, Asahi's director of cultural projects and business development, and Ms **Ritsuko Yamagishi**, associate deputy manager, who is in charge of regular contact with IBBY. The discussions covered the Beijing congress as well as further plans in connection with the IBBY-Asahi Reading Promotion Award.

Asahi Shimbun is refurbishing its website in Japanese and in English and will have a special page for the IBBY Asahi Award.

When Chieko Suemori and I met **Naoko Torizuka** at the JBBY secretariat we thanked her for her hard work in connection with the tsunami collection. In addition to Mr Yamada's tsunami contributions and that of the Seizansha publishing house (3 million yen), JBBY has collected a further 2.1 million yen.

## **Korea**

After arrival in Korea I was taken by Ms **Suzanna Samstag Oh** to Nami island, situated north of Seoul on the Hangang river, where I met Mr **Kang Woo-Hyon**, president of the Korean section of IBBY. Mr Kang is a well-known artist and graphic designer. The Nami Children's Book Festival was in progress when I arrived.

The **Minn** family owns the island, which is covered in beautiful trees. When Nami Island Inc. was founded, Mr Kang was given a free hand in organising the activities on the island. The outcome is a little paradise: an island of nature, art and culture.

Thanks to the Korean TV serial 'Winter Sonata', which was filmed on the island, it has become very popular with families and young couples as well as tourist groups. All over the island are buildings and sculptures designed by Mr Kang, often from recycled material. While I was there, a



*Peter Schreck with Nami Island staff*



*Peter Schneck on Nami Island*

*Top: Peter Schneck and Suzanna Oh at the Book Exhibition on Nami Island*

Hans Christian Andersen exhibition supported by the HCA Centre in Odense and an exhibition on TA Edison's work were displayed.

I also met Ms **Lee Kye-Young**, vice president of Nami Island Inc, Mr **Minn Kyung-Hyun**, the senior manager of the planning and public relations team, and several other staff members.

The following day I was a guest of honour at a special 'thank you' dinner given in appreciation of the embassies' support for the Children's Books Festival. I

met authors, artists, publishers and others connected to children's literature. Among them was Mr **Heo Sun Yeong**, director of the Suncheon Library of Miracle, one of eight huge children's libraries that have been established in recent years.

My time in Seoul ended with a visit to the book gallery of the Cho Bang Editions Publishing House, a leading Korean children's publishing house, directed by Mr **Chung Sang Yin** and Ms **Kyung-Sook Shin**. Ms Shin is a founding member of KBBY and was a member of the Bologna international selection committee this year.

### ***A word of thanks***

I would like to end by expressing my gratitude for all the hospitality I received in China, Japan and Korea and to thank all officers and members of CBBY, JBBY and KBBY for their careful preparation and for the wonderful help and support I received in all the three countries.

## *To a future Congress Organizer*

*Jay Heale, organiser of the 29th IBBY congress in Cape Town, offers an open letter consisting of helpful questions and words of advice to anyone thinking of hosting an IBBY congress*

Dear Fellow Enthusiast (You must be an enthusiast or you wouldn't be thinking of inviting IBBY to your country.)

The first thing I have to say is GO FOR IT! The second thing is BE SURE WHY YOU WANT TO. You don't need degrees or diplomas – just passion, energy, vision, love for children and their books, a sense of humour and obstinate determination.

### ***Motivation***

Why do you want to host an IBBY congress?

What do you hope to achieve?

Can you raise the status of children's literature in your country?

Will the children of your country benefit?

Do you want to involve children in the programme?

### ***The theme***

It is for the host IBBY section to choose the theme of the conference part of the congress. This should be part of your overall vision, linked to 'What do you hope to achieve?'

### ***Timing***

Allow plenty of time: IBBY South Africa needed five years to put it together, from nought to a full congress.

### ***Working together***

There are two 'bosses': the IBBY Executive Committee and your own team. In our experience, IBBY encourages the host to 'do their own thing' and the secretariat is hugely helpful.

### ***Programme***

Exactly what programme are you thinking of planning?

An IBBY congress is not merely a conference. It will have official IBBY events, conference presentations, exhibitions of local books and talent, relaxed social occasions.

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***And here are a few extra 'unofficial' guidelines***

Coffee breaks are sacred – that's when the networking happens. IBBY folk like to enjoy themselves – so make sure the social occasions are fun. This may be the only opportunity for some people to visit your country – so offer opportunities for tourism and the occasional free evening. Include as much as possible in the overall price.

***Finances***

These are your own problem!

There's not much the host can do about the cost of airfares, but all other expenses need to be looked at carefully. Consider such things as:

Can you budget for a lower registration fee for delegates from less affluent IBBY sections?

Is there a wide enough range of accommodation on offer?

Is it a good idea to have some activities as optional extras?

Transport is always expensive. How can this be simplified?

I would strongly advise all congress hosts to consider quoting the registration fee in their own local currency. That way you know what you're going to get!

How big is your main conference venue? Calculate how many paying delegates are needed to break even. Note 'paying' delegates – you will have about 50 non-payers including IBBY EC members, keynote speakers and your own team.)

Hardly anybody will give you money to help you run a conference, however noble your intentions!

***Organisation***

Decide early on what you can handle and what you can't. Think of hiring professionals to cope with registration and hotel accommodation, local transport, tours, exhibition stands, projection equipment, simultaneous translation and publicity.



*South African exhibition at Yamada Bee Farm*

We were exhausted, of course. That was to be expected. But we believe that South Africa benefited from the event. And we were told that our visitors found it both stimulating and fun. Librarians, teachers, publishers, writers, illustrators were involved and amazed at the enrichment offered through gathering so many enthusiasts from around the world. They discovered practical ideas for bringing books and children together. They shared in the great IBBY love of books. They won't moan any more about the high cost of belonging to IBBY!

So, when are we coming to your country?

All good wishes

Jay Heale

(jay@bookchat.co.za)

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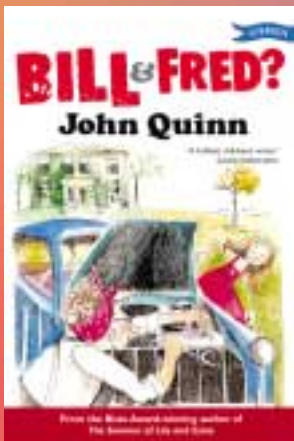
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