

# PUBLISHING PERSPECTIVES

2025

FRANKFURT BOOK FAIR MAGAZINE

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Plus Anniversary Celebrations,  
Reporting on AI, and More



# A Welcome From Frankfurter Buchmesse's CEO

Since its beginnings, the mission of Frankfurter Buchmesse has been to celebrate books and the power of dialogue across all borders. As the leading international book fair, we are here to offer a platform for the publishing industry to conduct business and exchange ideas in peace and security, even in times of geopolitical conflicts and a tense world order.

Publishing professionals and visitors from more than 140 countries come to Frankfurt every year. As tensions rise in many parts of the world, and as the freedom to publish seems to become increasingly threatened, it's even more important to foster a platform for international exchange: to not only hear, but to listen and find a way to talk, work, and cooperate with each other.

I'm very happy to see that this year, our Literary Agents and Scouts Center sold out very early, indicating that the rights business continues to thrive. The expansion of our Comics Business Center, our Audio area, and our Book-to-Screen program—which will bring more film producers and rights managers together than in the years before—underline this positive trend.

I hope, while you're in Frankfurt, that you'll not only attend meetings and one of our many trade events and expert talks, but also take the time to enlarge your international network. And to share—with old friends and new encounters—stories and ideas, spark new businesses, and find the common ground we all have as people in publishing.

I wish you a very successful and enjoyable book fair week. *-Juergen Boos*



## Frankfurt's 77th Iteration, in Unsettling Times

*As political upheavals and bewildering choices crowd in on the publishing industry, its missions of clarity, coherence, and patience may soothe a shaken world*

By Porter Anderson

### The Drivers of Change

Somewhere between the retirement of Kristenn Einarsson and the youth of Ege Dündar you'll find the whole world book publishing industry this week at Frankfurter Buchmesse.

You'll find "Children's Books in a Fragile World" at the Frankfurt Kids Conference, and you'll learn about Latin America's markets as so deeply understood by Roberto Banchik at Penguin Random House Grupo Editorial.

You may feel the energy of new programs at the Brazilian stand and the thrill of the International Publishers Association's new Defenders' Award, conceived by IPA president Gvantsa Jobava amid an urgent need to recognize those in publishing who refuse to be deprived of the freedom to publish.

HarperVia's Barcelona-born Juan Mila will tell you that "even in these risk-averse times, we get support from the bookselling community" for international literature, a great sign in an often translation-resistant world.

Two key companies are turning 20 this year. You'll find Michael Reynolds of Europa Editions talking about the fallacy of the old "3 percent" mindset that limits how adventurous of that is dependent on how many titles in translation are released every year.

And from Milano, you'll hear the president and CEO of the two-decade-old Gruppo editoriale Mauri Spagnol (GeMS), Stefano Mauri, say that having 11 independent publishers

and 21 imprints in his company has meant that as market shifts evolved, "The diversity and variety of many imprints makes it possible to adapt to the changes of the readers' taste. 'Pause' is not in our vocabulary."

As in so many parts of so many societies today, the concept of aging leadership exists in parts of book publishing. PEN International's Ege Dündar wants us to look at the wealth of younger talent available. "If we're seeking change," he says in an interview from London with Publishing Perspectives, "we must look to the youth and ways to support them. They've been the drivers of change across history and are now busy rallying people of different ages, countries, and ideological divides into acting on shared, urgent concerns."

Speaking of urgent concerns, the artificial intelligence issue—and how publishing needs to handle it—may mean heartburn for many as Big Tech LLMs trample copyright and publishers try to determine how to use AI tools in their operations. The Book Industry Study Group in the States has just produced a new report showing that "While slightly less than half of individuals are using AI for work now, the overwhelming majority reported multiple pain points with AI, including serious ethical concerns." The adoption of AI in publishing that many are contemplating, in other words, may not be the runaway train some have feared. Take a breath.

And while many have admired the European Union for its AI Act, the Börsenverein's Jes-

sica Sängers tells Publishing Perspectives that stakeholders are in difficult talks in Brussels because, "Co-legislators dodged the question of precisely what model providers must disclose and left it to other bodies to work on the details." In short, parts of the EU AI Act are more aspirational than practical at this point, making implementation a thicket of unresolved challenges.

Our Frankfurt Show Magazine has much more to help fill in such blanks that you may encounter this year at Frankfurt—areas in which much seems unsettled, imperatives can be hard to define, and compassionate discussion once more becomes the obvious gift of this enormous trade show and its people.

As Juergen Boos says in his welcoming note, "Publishing professionals and visitors from more than 140 countries come to Frankfurt every year. As tensions rise in many parts of the world, and as the freedom to publish seems to become increasingly threatened, it's even more important to foster a platform for international exchange: to not only hear, but to listen and find a way to talk, work, and cooperate with each other."

We hope the information and ideas and lessons related by so many key publishing professionals in these pages will give you new insights and much-needed longtime reminders of what's important about the world publishing industry and what we all make of it.

Welcome to Frankfurt, in a complex, rich moment.

**PUBLISHER:** Erin L. Cox  
**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:** Porter Anderson  
**ADVERTISING MANAGER:** Meike Eckern  
**CONTRIBUTORS:** Jaroslaw Adamowski  
Eric Dupuy  
Talita Facchini

**ON THE COVER:** Attendees in Frankfurt Studio, FMB 2024 (Image: Frankfurter Buchmesse)

OUR PARTNER



# PEN International's Ege Dündar: 'We Must Look to the Youth'

**The youngest PEN International board member, Turkish-born Ege Dündar is an author-activist leading a new context for young citizens' place in a troubled world.**

By Porter Anderson

## 'Young People Raising Their Voices'

Among the most-watched of young activists in the publishing space this year, Ege Dündar is a thoughtful, innovative, fast-rising thinker and writer who's the youngest person to serve on the board of PEN International.

While Dündar's eloquent input will be part of several events during Frankfurt Week, a key moment for your calendar might be The Future of Writing and Free Expression: Promoting Young Voices and Peer-to-Peer Solidarity Around the World. In that event, Dündar will be doing what many in the industry are appreciating in his work: he's introducing younger voices to the fray. In that session, he'll moderate a talk with writers Fatoumata Ngom; Zoya Miari; and Nedim Turfent on Center Stage, Hall 4.1, B68. The conversation starts at 5 p.m. Thursday (October 16) and is followed by a networking reception at 6 p.m. (RSVPs are requested to [paul.julien@pen-international.org](mailto:paul.julien@pen-international.org).)

That session, programmed by Frankfurt's John Steinmark, is backed by PEN International's Young Writer Committee and Frankfurt Book Fair itself, and will seat Dündar in the specialization he has cultivated so impressively: that of young, democratic activists' impresario. A graduate in international politics at City University London, he's also the author most recently of the 2023 *All These Things Aren't Really Lost*.

And if you'd like an immediate look at some of Dündar's work, check out PEN International's Tomorrow Club site ([tomorrowclub.world](http://tomorrowclub.world)) and his new "Spotlight" curation of "Young Voices of the Americas." Here are young adults writing from Guatemala, Venezuela, Mexico, El Salvador, Cuba, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, and more.

Deeply connected in humanitarian channels, Dündar—in case his name is ringing a bell—"gets his activism honestly," some would say: He's the 30-year-old son of the celebrated Turkish journalist and documentarian

Can Dündar, a recipient of the CPJ International Press Freedom Award and prolific writer. Ege Dündar at 19 saw his father made a political prisoner in Turkey. It changed him.

At 30, the younger Dündar has just gotten his British passport, he tells *Publishing Perspectives*, so that he, like his father, now has an expatriate's ease of travel and contact that will help him grow an already promising young career in the humanities.

The younger Dündar is keenly involved in the growing youth programs of the World Expression Forum (WEXFO)—see our focus on WEXFO founder Kristenn Einarsson on Page 23. He was in Krakow in September for the PEN International annual congress, one of more than 200 delegates who found themselves, as he puts it, "less than 300 kilometers from the war in Ukraine and Auschwitz."

His organizing efforts in Poland were made along with young writers from Slovenia, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Nigeria, Myanmar, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Malawi, Chile, Argentina, and Brazil. All is not youthful in Dündar's purview, of course. The novelist Olga Tokarczuk "joined our leadership as vice-president," he says, "and another vice-president, Margaret Atwood, reiterated her support."

In fact, Dündar is canny enough about his interest and activism in leading youth programs to know that talking some veterans make sense. To prepare the curations he's doing of young writers' material from various world regions, he has traveled to PEN centers, "talking to the older writer-members about what they think they should do for young people, what is needed in the current context, and then enlisting a young person from that center."

Give him a minute when you see him, and Dündar will fill you in on how he sees things at this point in Nepal and Turkey and the key roles that young people there are playing.

"The past few years," he says in a new note that just arrived at *Publishing Perspectives*, "

we've witnessed more young people raising their voices to move their societies forward, from Serbia to Bangladesh, Kenya to Nepal, Turkey to Myanmar. This is not a coincidence, they are reacting to a boiling pot of rising inequality, corruption, and regression of affordability and civil rights. When they speak up, they are facing many repercussions, silencing, prosecution and state violence, which fans the flames. They watch in real time as their future prospects diminish. They witness the environmental and societal breakdown around them, as their countries are mismanaged with economic and social policies that protect the wealthy few and prey on the disadvantaged majority. ... If we're seeking change, we must look to the youth and ways to support them. They've been the drivers of change across history and are now busy rallying people of different ages, countries, and ideological divides into acting on shared, urgent concerns. Despite having little at hand themselves."

With his Young Writers Committee and Tomorrow Club at PEN International, Dündar is becoming a new lead among voices of concern, compassion, and democracy, a new go-to leader for movements and writers who know that new generations of power are waiting to be tapped.

"If we're seeking change," he says in an interview from London with *Publishing Perspectives*, "we must look to the youth and ways to support them. They've been the drivers of change across history and are now busy rallying people of different ages, countries, and ideological divides into acting on shared, urgent concerns. Despite having little at hand themselves."

"What to do about it and how to support peers rising with the same concerns facing similar consequences is what we need to figure out collectively."

## The future of writing and free expression: promoting young voices and peer-to-peer solidarity around the world

Moderated by Ege Dündar, with special guests Fatoumata Ngom, Zoya Miari, and Nedim Turfent



Ege Dündar

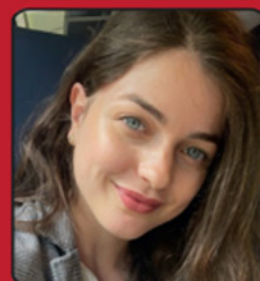


Thursday 16th October, 5pm

Center Stage, Hall 4.1

Followed by a networking reception from 6pm

Please RSVP to [paul.julien@pen-international.org](mailto:paul.julien@pen-international.org)





# IPA's Gvantsa Jobava on the new Defenders Award

*Looking to widen the work of its Prix Voltaire, the IPA opens a new award to honor those who defend freedoms of expression, publishing, and reading.*

By Porter Anderson

## 'Strengthening Democracy'

The International Publishers Association's (IPA) Prix Voltaire is an annual award for heroes in publishing—those who often risk their safety, their livelihoods, their freedom, and even their lives for the freedom to publish, the broader trinity of freedoms - to publish, expression, and to read. Helmed by the IPA's Freedom to Publish committee and directed by IPA communications specialist James Taylor, the Prix Voltaire has honored publishers imprisoned, the widows and/or widowers of publishers whose lives were taken, and brave publishers who daily stare down censorship efforts in order to produce the literature their consumers need.

Tbilisi-based publisher Gvantsa Jobava is in the first year of her term as IPA president.

This week, she'll be joined by Frankfurt president and CEO Juergen Boos; PEN International president Burhan Sönmez; and others to introduce the *IPA Freedom of Expression Defenders Award*. (FEDA).

Jobava tells us that she actually sees it as a "new mission" for IPA's portfolio, "to encourage publishers—to take action and resist, to highlight their important role and mission in strengthening democracy.

"As the new IPA president," she says, "I approached the Freedom to Publish committee with the initiative to establish this new *Defenders Award*.

"My hope was that IPA could create a project that would allow us to recognize companies or organizations related to the book sector in demonstrating their commitment to the freedom of expression, the freedom to publish, and the freedom to read in their activities.

I hope we'll be able to significantly expand our efforts in this direction, highlighting organizations that make invaluable contributions to defending the trinity of freedoms on both local and global levels, and drawing attention to how crucial this work is for the book sector."

Jobava says that IPA expects to open the new Defenders Award for nominations, and *Publishing Perspectives* will of course notify our readership when the submissions period begins.

Meanwhile, Jobava says, "It has been one of the many happy moments of my presidency so far to see the Freedom to Publish Committee take my idea, look at it critically and refine it, to give it a name and to agree to be the jury. I'm truly grateful to the committee for such



impressive work accomplished in so short a time.

"In addition to this new award, we'll also be looking at the growing restrictions on human freedom, increasing inequality, and the erosion of rights affecting millions of people—even in our modern world. Clearly, when we talk about inequality in the world, one of the first issues that comes to mind is women's rights and the challenges of achieving gender equality."

To that end, Jobava speaks of what she sees as a need for gender equality. "I believe it's important that, authors and publishers use books to tell the world countless stories of women's oppression, as well as the stories of those remarkable figures who fight tirelessly to achieve equality. Our own sector must itself be an example of that same equality. Of course, much has been done, but there is still a long way to go to truly achieve gender parity."

*Publishing Perspectives* is the world media partner of the International Publishers Association.

## PublisHer Lounge Makes Its Frankfurt Debut

**Targeted programming is available every day this week at the PublisHer Lounge**

By Porter Anderson

### 'Join Trailblazing Women Publishers'

Having established the PublisHer international network of publishing women in 2019 during London Book Fair, the United Arab Emirates' Sheikha Bodour Al Qasimi has shepherded the program into a far-flung institution for book-business women.

At the 2024 Sharjah Publishers Conference, Al Qasimi introduced the newest development in the PublisHer approach, a "PublisHer Lounge" that provides programming and instruction, mentoring and camaraderie for women in some of the largest trade-show and book-fair settings in the world.

The PublisHer Lounge makes its debut at Frankfurt this week in Hall 4.1, C28, with the support of Buchmesse, and there's a full schedule of activities and career-supportive events planned.

Be sure to check the WomenInPublishing.org site for a full listing of all the offerings. For now, we have three key panel discussions that will be of interest to many trade visitors at Frankfurt.

### WEDNESDAY, October 15

Starting at 1 p.m., Center Stage, Hall 4.1  
A welcome speech with PublisHer managing director Zhora Qureshi is followed by a panel, **The Invisible Women of Publishing**.

"Exploring why such women's work is undervalued and discussing how we can elevate and celebrate every contribution that powers the industry."

With Bologna Children's Book Fair (April 13 to 16) director Elena Pasoli; Copyright Clearance Center president and CEO Tracey Armstrong; Agamee Parkashani's executive director Mitia Osman; and BookCareers' Suzanne Collier. Moderated by Emma House.

### THURSDAY, October 16

10 to 11 a.m., PublisHer Lounge  
**Beyond Tokenism: Women in Executive Leadership**

"Women are increasingly visible in publishing but what does true influence look like beyond simply occupying a seat at the table?"

With Andrea Pasion-Flores, Milflores Publishing, Manila, and president of the book

development association of the Philippines; Nitasha Devasar, managing director and commercial lead with Taylor & Francis in India, South Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa; and Melissa Fleming, under-secretary-general for global communications at the United Nations. Moderated by Elsevier's Rachael Martin.

### FRIDAY, October 17

10 to 11 a.m., PublisHer Lounge  
**Women Publishing the Future: Voices from Emerging Markets**

"Join trailblazing women publishers from across Africa, Asia, Latin America, as they share how they're overcoming obstacles, championing local voices, building sustainable businesses, and taking local stories onto the world stage."

With Emily Chuang, founder of Emily Books Agency; Ama Dadson, founder and CEO, AkooBooks; and Meru Gokhale, CEO of Editrix. Moderated by Mohinder Sahni of Om Books.

Much more programming is set for each day at the PublisHer Lounge, be sure to watch the schedule.



# Malaysia's IPA International Publishers Congress Opens Registration

*Running July 5 to 9, Kuala Lumpur's program is designed as "a call for action" to balance the energies of technology and the need to safeguard creativity.*

By Porter Anderson

## 'The Soul of Our Industry'

With its slogan announced as Publishing Intelligence, Sustaining Forward, the 35th biennial International Publishers Congress from the IPA is registering attendees now for the July 5-through-9 event in Kuala Lumpur.

The program's thematic guide is already being built, with speakers being gathered, and details frequently being added.

"Our mission," organizers say about the event, "is to challenge and empower the global publishing community to harness the power of data, technology, and innovation while steadfastly safeguarding the human creativity, ethical integrity, and sustainable practices that are the soul of our industry."

"We are committed to fostering a publishing ecosystem that is intelligent in its operations, resilient in its values, and forward-thinking in its impact."

Organizers stress that they see the pro-



A moment in the handoff from Guadalajara to Kuala Lumpur for the coming 35th International Publishers Congress. Image: IPA

gram as a "global movement dedicated to navigating the transformative challenges and opportunities of our industry."

And in a statement on the developing plans of the congress, we read, "Publishing Intelligence is about making smarter decisions through data-driven insights, AI-powered automation, and emerging digital tools. Yet, with these advancements come urgent ethical concerns—AI and copyright, content authenticity, and information integrity—alongside the quieter threat of diminishing creativity and human touch that defines publishing."

"Publishers must guide this conversation, precious human connections."

There'll be more information during Frankfurt at a reception on Friday (October 17) at the MABOPA stand in Hall 5.1, and from the program's site, where registration information now is available: PublishersCongress.com

## Among a set of goals for this extensive program:

- Fostering global dialogue
- Exploring new frontiers
- Facilitating business opportunities;
- Championing global inclusivity and sustainability

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# Philippines as Guest of Honor – ‘The World Deserves To Hear the Voices’

*This year, the Philippines is the Guest of Honor country at Frankfurter Buchmesse. Publishing Perspectives sat down with members of this year's delegation to talk about what attendees can expect from this year's pavilion and to get an inside look into the Philippines market.*

By Erin L. Cox

## PATRICK FLORES, CURATOR OF THE GUEST OF HONOR PAVILION

The theme of the Philippines Guest of Honor program is "The Imagination Peoples the Air," a line based on the work of writer José Rizal—a national hero, an artist, and required reading in Philippine schools. Patrick Flores, curator of the pavilion, used that idea to develop the pavilion that attendees can see this week at the Messe.

Though books are the primary focus of Frankfurt's trade show, Flores notes that "literature would not emerge without the larger cultural context," illustrating the importance of showing the history, culture, and interplay of other arts from which great literary works

and the larger publishing scene stem.

There are four zones in the pavilion, each dedicated to Rizal; the work of national artists and national living treasures; the history of literature in the Philippines; and books on the Philippines published outside the country in the last five years.

The Philippine pavilion, designed by Stanley Ruiz, combines local materials with modular architecture that doubles as furniture. The structures are laid out to represent the 7,640 islands that make up the country, yet they're light and airy to represent the people and their generosity of spirit.



"It's an open situation for honoring the gifts of writing and reading in an unnerving but hopefully irrepressible world," writes Flores in his statement about the pavilion, "conceived by a guest 'who peoples the imagination.'" "That the word people figures in the theme is important for us. There are 100 million Filipinos who embody this imagination," says Flores. "The world deserves to hear the voices of this great number of our people."

## RICA BOLIPATA-SANTOS, DIRECTOR OF ATENEO DE MANILA UNIVERSITY PRESS

Prior to her current role at Ateneo de Manila University Press, Rica Bolipata-Santos was a bookseller, a writer, and a professor, deeply involved in not only the literary world, but also the larger arts community in the Philippines.

In a country with so many languages, writers always have to consider "who are you writing for, who are you writing to, who are you speaking for," Bolipata-Santos says. That consideration is a unique aspect of the writing community in the Philippines and one that you can see reflected in stories and poetry.

"Literature in the Philippines is as old as time, but we have a twisted history having been colonized by the Spanish, the United States, and the Japanese. We are hybrid beyond hybrid. Most of us are born bilingual or trilingual."

Growing up, Bolipata-Santos says she didn't have the same access to books that Filipino readers today might have, so when she'd visit her brother in New York City, she'd take books home with her to share with her friends, her colleagues, her community—which led to her role as a bookseller. Although her bookstore no longer exists, it helped build a community of readers, writers, and literary-minded individuals that endures.

It is the confluence of this community of artists—not just writers, but visual artists, musicians, dancers—that Bolipata-Santos says

drives Philippine literature and culture today. She finds this central to her work at Ateneo de Manila University Press.

"Rights and translations," she says. "Of course I take them very seriously, but those are endpoints. First, that requires really sitting down and talking to people and listening to people

and telling them your stories."

This week at the book fair, she hopes to continue to build on the relationships she began in her past visits to the show, and to expand her community with new colleagues and friends from many parts of the world.



As a part of Frankfurter Buchmesse's Guest of Honor Philippines program, an original "Jeepney," one of the public-transport vehicles used in the Philippines since the post-war era. Frankfurt Book Fair, working with Frankfurt City Marketing, has arranged for this "Jeepney Journey," during which the colorful, iconic Jeepney will serve as a stage, a meeting place, and an interactive hub for readings, talks, musical performances, and workshops, with seating, market stalls, and "selfie spots" surrounding the Jeepney. You'll find the Jeepney based in Frankfurt City Center's Roßmarkt, a symbol of Filipino creativity and improvisation as a "community vehicle."



You can watch video interviews of the Philippines delegation on the Publishing Perspectives Youtube channel by scanning the QR Code.



# SAME SAME BUT DIFFERENT

DISCOVER THE FUTURE  
OF FRANKFURTER BUCHMESSE:

**FBM NEXT**  
SHOWROOM

FOYER HALL 4.1

# At the Frankfurt Kids Conference: Chilean Reading Specialist Constanza Mekis

By Eric Dupuy

The Chilean librarian Constanza Mekis addresses the Frankfurt Kids Conference on Frankfurter Buchmesse's opening day, presenting innovative reading-promotion methodologies as her country prepares for its role as Frankfurt's guest of honor in 2027.

Mekis, a librarian at the University of Chile and chief of Fundación Palabra, will participate in the conference's Light in the Darkness panel during Wednesday's conference, which runs from 4 to 6:30 p.m. Her appearance in the conference marks her first visit to Frankfurt.

The foundation has developed what it calls "expanded reading," a methodology that "transcends the text, integrating the visual, oral, bodily, sensory, and participatory" elements. The approach builds on research linking childhood reading for pleasure, cognitive development, and well-being. This is based in a 2024 study in the journal *Psychological Medicine*.

"We promote the bond with reading through joy," Mekis says, "cultural participation, and a sense of community. We believe our innovation lies in transforming reading into a joyful, experiential, and interdisciplinary practice."

The methodology she's referring to operates through BILIJ—an acronym for Biblioteca Interactiva Latinoamericana Infantil y Juvenil—the Santiago-based Latin American Interactive Library, which combines reading, play, nature, and Latin American heritage. The foundation also runs Nido, a program bringing reading, music, and play to Santiago kindergartens.

## Chile's 2027 Preparations

Chile's preparation for its 2027 guest of honor role, she says, "involves multiple institutions and of course the ministry of foreign affairs, which helps support my presence here in Frankfurt this year."

"The ministry of cultures, arts and heritage is leading the coordination in association with the Chilean Book Chamber; the Corporation for Books and Reading; La Furia del Libro; the Association of Independent Publishers; IBBY Chile; and CLIC Editoras, a women's cooperative of 10 publishers."

Mekis' own background ensures the close and experienced integration of her own efforts with some of the key organizations she mentions. She holds a master's degree in reading, books, and children's and young-adult literature from the University of Zaragoza. She was president of IBBY (the International Board on Books for Young People) for Latin America and the Caribbean in the years 2020 through 2022.

In conversation, Mekis identifies key contemporary works she finds are of special merit for translation consideration: *Las rayas del tigre* (The Tiger's Stripes) by Marcelo Simonetti and Sebastián Illabaca; *La tortilla corredora* by Laura

Herrera and Scarlet Narciso; and *9 kilómetros* by Claudio Aguilera and Gabriela Lyon. Additional titles include *Ahí* by Claudio Aguilera and Vicente Cociña; *Kramp* by María José Ferrada; and *Mapocho* by Nona Fernández.

"I dream that for this great event," Chile's guest of honor program at Frankfurt, she says, "there will be a large number of Chilean books translated into German, as a luminous bridge between cultures," she says.



Constanza Mekis works with kids in a library setting in Santiago.  
Image: Fundación Palabra

## The Evolution of a Book Market

The Chilean book market has expanded significantly, Mekis tells *Publishing Perspectives*, primarily by strengthening of the book and reading chain. The country now comprises approximately 370 publishers. They're driven by independent houses enabled by low-cost digital printing.

"The boom of independent publishers is closely linked to the advance of low-cost digital printing," Mekis says. "This has enabled small print runs, even as small as 100 copies, and that has made space for books with a wide thematic diversity."

Current trends, she says, include environmental and naturalist themes with sustainability as a guiding principle.

Intergenerational ties, particularly with older adults, represent another emerging focus. And young readers themselves are entering the creation space, notably through Editorial Cabeza Hueca, which has been founded by Emilia Aravena Díaz as "a publishing house of children, for children."

Format shifts include cloth and board-book editions for early childhood. Digital offerings, virtual book clubs, hybrid fairs, and interactive catalogues now complement print books. Publishers are expanding value chains through author workshops, game development, and social media engagement.

## Mediation and Visual Language

Reading mediators have emerged as specialized professionals within the book chain in Chile, Mekis says.

"Publishing is not enough," as she puts it. "Books need mediators who can open pathways to enjoyment, understanding, and dialogue."

Chilean visual language has had pronounced development over 25 years. "The unique quality of the visual language that has emerged over the last 25 years," she says, "is simply outstanding. Chilean artists showcase the country's natural, cultural, and emotional richness."

Mekis says it's urgent to strengthen Latin American children's and youth literature network. "Today there is little awareness," she tells us, "of what is being produced in each country, and this limits the circulation of our works." While publishers like Ekaré Sur and Amanuta include regional authors, she points out, regular distribution circuits remain insufficient.

"Latin America has immense wealth," Mekis says, "both in its tradition and in its current production, and it's urgent to share and value it in all its magnitude."

For early childhood, Mekis highlights the importance of book toys, through which she says children participate actively with all their senses—touch, sight, hearing—thus facilitating learning and cognitive development. In this, she cites the work of Brazilian researcher Ana Paiva's inn transitional spaces uniting reading pleasure with play.

## An International Library Model

Fundación Palabra draws inspiration, Mekis says, from the International Youth Library in Munich, which was founded by Jella Lepman in 1949.

She refers to Chilean Nobel laureate Gabriela Mistral as "Chile's first librarian" for her work with children and teachers, and talks of the most valuable development being "a library that involves an entire community, offering cultural opportunities, hospitality, shelter, imagination, creativity, and love. Frankfurt 2025 will be like walking through the paradise of books," she says, comparing the experience to "standing for the first time before the grandeur of Machu Picchu."

In identifying a need for publishers to integrate "cycles of expanded reading mediation," Mekis says, "The future of the Chilean publishing market will depend on its ability to offer diverse, innovative, and meaningful experiences, in tune with international trends, forming critical citizens committed to their communities."

The Frankfurt Kids Conference 2025 theme is *Children's Books in a Fragile World*.





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# New in 2025, Frankfurt Expands Its Book-to-Screen Programming

***Building on many years of film-and-book-industry exchanges, Buchmesse this year has developed 'Book to Screen Day' as a more concentrated, broader offering for professionals in film, television, and publishing.***

By Erin L. Cox

Books have long been the source matter for some of our favorite films and television shows, but the path from book to screen can be challenging. Each year during the trade show, Frankfurter Buchmesse hosts a Book-to-Screen Day to connect the publishing industry with producers, filmmakers, and screenwriters for an exchange of ideas and to build stronger networks for collaboration.

"The international reach of Frankfurter Buchmesse's book-to-screen activities continues to grow, with more film professionals joining us each year," says Niki Theron, senior manager for international projects and film at Buchmesse.

"The presence of decision-makers from several A-list film festivals in Frankfurt is a very encouraging sign," Theron says. "Our 2025 program is shaping up to be particularly exciting. I'm especially looking forward to welcoming Keith Bennie, vice-president of public programming at the Toronto Film Festival; Claire Lundberg, founder and managing

director of CTL Scouting; and director Luiz Fernando Carvalho onstage."

The program for this year's Book-to-Screen Day features a master class on film scouting; matchmaking to bring publishers and filmmakers together; a panel discussion about the film adaptation of author Caroline Wahl's bestseller *22 Lengths* with director Mia Maariel Meyer and screenwriter Elena Hell; and a look at adaptation for a different kind of screen and audience through gaming.

#### This year's partners include:

- **CE Producers**
- **Czech Film Center**
- **EAVE** (European Audiovisual Film Entrepreneurs);
- **ICAA** (Instituto de la Cinematografía y de las Artes Audiovisuales, the Spanish Film Institute).

In addition, these German partners are involved in the 2025 edition of the program: Berlinale Co-Production Market; Hessen Film

& Medien; Film- und Kinobüro Hessen e.V., PROG (Producers of Germany); and the DDV (Deutscher Drehbuchverband).

What's more, the Czech Film Center and ICAA are bringing delegations of international producers to Frankfurt.

Frankfurter Buchmesse's involvement with the film industry goes beyond just the week of the book fair.

Since 2006, Frankfurter Buchmesse and the Co-Production Market have hosted the Books at Berlinale pitch event, which gives publishers and agencies the opportunity to pitch their books to some 200 European film producers.

As part of the Marché du Film at the Cannes Film Festival, Frankfurter Buchmesse is the official partner of 'Shoot the Book!' which bring publishers and producers together.

This year, Frankfurter Buchmesse showcased "Book-to-Screen" events with its partners at book fairs in Brussels, Thessaloniki, Prague, and the film festival in Karlovy Vary.

## Film Scout Claire Lundberg on a Changing Industry

***Streaming she says, has made the job more international and more diverse: 'You don't feel like the stories are as limited.'***

By Erin L. Cox

### 'Managing Your Own Heartbreak'

The life of a film scout can be quite exciting, discovering a fantastic book, bringing a publisher and production company together, and giving a writer's story a new audience. To outsiders, it can also seem quite stressful, although Claire Lundberg, founder of CTL Scouting, might not categorize it as such—she describes it as "the most fun job."

At the time of our original interview, she had to reschedule because a deadline for offers on a project had been moved up unexpectedly, requiring her to drop everything and act quickly. For scouts, that's all part of the job.

Lundberg didn't get her start in a publishing house or literary agency the way many scouts did. She came to it from the production side, first as a theater director and producer, then in working with the famous producer Scott Rudin, then running MGM's literary office. It's that different pathway that provides a unique perspective compared to those of her peers.

"I'm always thinking about adaptation and what it could be," she says, "and I'm coming at it from the production perspective. I'm very agnostic about where it fits in the film and TV market, and I think that, for people coming out of publishing, that can sometimes feel uncomfortable."

For many scouts, the role can be challenging because they're merely connecting parties, not creating anything themselves, so there's no ownership over the project.

"You have to be able to manage your own heartbreak in all creative industries, but in scouting, you have to both really love it and be able to advocate for it and also be able to move on and let it go."

As the film and television marketplace changes, so does the way scouts do their work, the projects they focus on, and the clients for which they are scouting.

Lundberg notes that streaming has changed the industry quite a bit.

"When I started," she says, "I was a very classic feature scout for both big producers like Scott Rudin, and then for studios like MGM and Warner Bros. It was both very American-focused and quite narrow in terms of what a feature could be—Harry Potter, The Bourne Identity, The Martian, a Sophie Kinsella novel."

"With streaming, not only did it become more international," Lundberg says, "but it also became so much more diverse in terms of the kinds of stories that people could tell. And that makes your job as a scout more complicated, because obviously you must cover more of the market. But it's also more fun, because you don't feel like the stories are as limited."

On Friday (October 17), Lundberg will be discussing the role of scouting in more detail in the Book-to-Screen Master Class at 10 a.m. in Hall 5.1, Room Arrival.



Frankfurt's Film and Television Forum space at the 2009 trade show. Image FBM



# HarperVia's Juan Milà on The Expanding World of Works in Translation

*'Books in Translation are as American as Apple Pie'*

By Erin L. Cox

## Young Readers Like Translations

In January, Juan Milà will be speaking at The NYU Advanced Publishing Institute in New York City on the subject of "Global Voices: The Expanding World of Works in Translation," a topic he knows well as editorial director of HarperCollins' imprint dedicated to publishing international books, HarperVia.

Founded in 2018 under the guidance of Judith Curr, president and publisher of the HarperOne Group at HarperCollins in New York, HarperVia's mission has been to "work with agents and translators to bring a wide selection of international voices to readers in the English language markets.

"Since our first books were launched in the fall of 2019, we have published 146 new titles and inherited a backlist of more than 100 titles in translation from the HMH acquisition. Together, more than 60% of HarperVia's titles have been translated from 25 languages," says Milà.

The United States has often been cited as a difficult market for books in translation, but in recent years, Milà has noted that there is more of an appetite for books from other countries.

"Among the more encouraging changes is the growing interest in international and translated books among younger readers in

the 20 to 35 range, the generation that grew up with manga and anime.

"Social media and online existence fuel a more globalized culture and many smaller categories and readerships, though it's more challenging to break out new voices. A more data-driven intermediation between publishers and readers has helped expand the offering but also atomized it and made print distribution more conservative.

"But even in these risk averse times we get support from the bookselling community who also are intent on bringing the best of the international community into their store via translated works," says Milà.

In 2023, Spencer Ruchti, events manager at Third Place Books in Seattle, and Justin Walls, coeditor of translation-focused pick-of-the-month series Du Mois Monthly, launched the Cercador Prize for Translation, which recognizes works of literature in translation as selected by a committee of independent booksellers based across the United States.

"Another challenge is always how to evaluate a translation project because of the extra time it requires. It took us more than two years to publish Charlotte Collins and Ruth Martin beautiful translation of Nino

Harischwili's *The Lack of Light*, but this epic story of friendship in post-Soviet Georgia feels even timelier today."

In the United States, as differing voices and perspectives are being challenged, it seems like it might be a difficult time to be publishing works in translation, but Milà is undaunted.

"While there hasn't been a huge sensation in recent years, the kind that helps expand the field, like Stieg Larsson or Elena Ferrante, we see signs that American readers' curiosity and appetite for different perspectives and different ways of inhabiting the world is still beating strong.

"Translations from Korean (from Han Kang to Park Seolyeon's *A Magical Girl Retires*) and Japanese (from Asako Yuzuki to healing fiction or Uketsu's genre-defying *Strange Houses*) are becoming increasingly popular.

"Whether you're looking to escape or be moved or enlightened, there's such a wealth of options among international books!," says Milà. "Translation is only becoming more prominent. As the saying goes, it's as American as apple pie. And even apples were an import!"



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# Ingram Content Group's MediaScout Database Looks to Global Markets

*'Great stories transcend borders—and we want MediaScout to reflect that,' says Ingram's Margaret Harrison about MediaScout. (Sponsored)*

By Erin L. Cox

## 'The Appetite for Cross-Border Storytelling'

Earlier this year, Ingram Content Group launched MediaScout, a database designed to connect film and television professionals with books available for screen adaptation.

"MediaScout was born out of a clear gap in the market: the lack of a service that showcased frontlist, deep backlist, and not-yet-published IP in a centralized, rights-aware information service for film and television professionals," says Margaret Harrison, Vice-President of Digital Services at Ingram Content Group.

"As Ingram talked more with book-to-screen professionals," she says, "we saw firsthand how many compelling stories were invisible to producers and studios."

MediaScout offers advanced search functionality across over 2 million titles and authors from many parts of the world, each entry featuring comprehensive, up-to-date rights information. The titles included are already in Ingram's vast distribution catalogue.

For publishers who are looking to revitalize their backlists, the database provides an opportunity to include older titles in addition to new releases.

Ingram provides curation on the site to highlight books that may be relevant to buyers. At the time of writing, the program is featuring the US National Book Award longlist as well as featured selections from the Venice Film Festival.

Subscribers can browse or search for books on relevant subjects on one centralized cost-effective platform, and then be connected quickly with the author, publisher, or agent to option the book. MediaScout provides a free data management tool for rights owners to share updated contact and rights

information to help with that seamless connection, including email, titles represented, author bios, rights status, and a description of the agency or publishing house.

The database began in the United States and quickly expanded its service to include the United Kingdom and Europe with further global expansion on the horizon.

Currently, MediaScout features titles in 52 languages, the bulk of which come from the current markets in which it is available – the United States, the United Kingdom, and Europe.

"We're actively working to onboard titles and authors from diverse regions and languages, because great stories transcend borders—and we want MediaScout to reflect that," says Harrison. "Our goal is to make it easier for international publishers and authors to showcase their work to a global entertainment audience."

In addition to titles in 52 languages, MediaScout also features thousands of books by independent authors not found anywhere else. Ingram Spark, the independent publishing platform also owned by Ingram Content Group, helps writers publish their work directly. With MediaScout, now the work of those authors can be seen by film and television professionals around the world.

In Frankfurt this week, Ingram's mission is much aligned with that of the book fair—to help bring stories to new audiences in other countries, reparations.

"One of the most exciting trends we're seeing," Harrison says, "is the appetite for cross-border storytelling. In particular, we have received requests for content from the Nordic region.

"MediaScout is designed to facilitate that



Margaret Harrison

kind of global rights discovery—giving publishers, agents, and authors from anywhere the chance to connect with filmmakers everywhere. It's a powerful shift, and we're proud to be part of it."

For more information on MediaScout or to meet with the Ingram Content Group team, visit Hall 6.0, Stand E127.

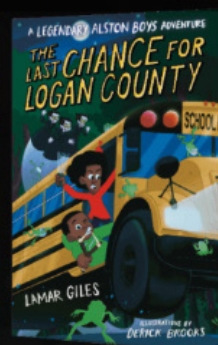
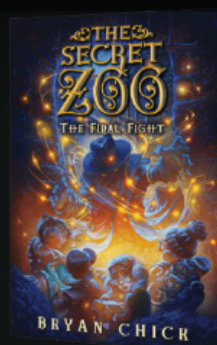
"Our goal is to make it easier for international publishers and authors to showcase their work to a global entertainment audience."

- Margaret Harrison

MediaScout

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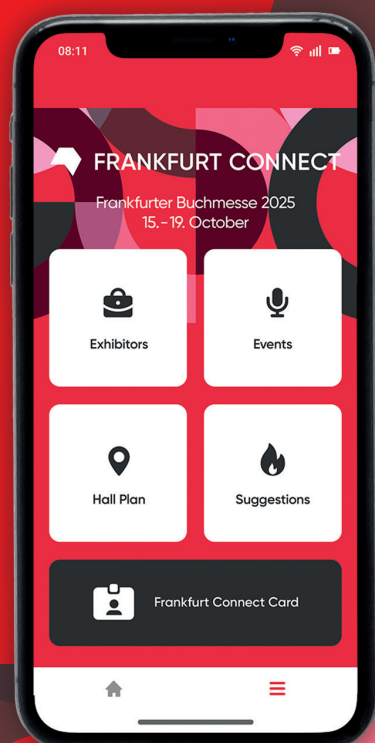






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Image: Europa Editions

## Europa Editions Celebrates Its 20th Anniversary

***'Modest but frequent innovation rather than repetition. That's the trick,' says Michael Reynolds on the delicate balancing act of Europa Editions.***

By Porter Anderson

Many Frankfurt regulars know Michael Reynolds, the executive publisher of New York's Europa Editions. And many, of course, also know Sandro Ferri and Sandra Ozzola Ferri, who co-founded both Europa Editions in 2005 and Edizioni E/O in 1979.

While thinking about how the Stateside Europa Editions is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, the parent company in Rome is approaching a half-century.

"Edizioni E/O was and is a ground-breaking independent press ... beginning with its location away from the traditional centers of Italian publishing, to its early commitment to bringing stories from—as Penguin and Philip Roth called it—the Other Europe, to its insistence on reaching readers directly and through bookstores rather than remaining aloof and beholden to traditional promotional mechanisms, and, above all, in its commitment to a true editorial project, a proposta editoriale, as opposed to following the whims of the market.

"All of these things, seen by many as anathema to the industry in the 1980s, added up to a singular and enduring independent publishing house that today is one of the most prominent and successful independent presses in the country.

"A few years from now," Reynolds says, "Edizioni E/O will celebrate its 50th birthday, and it has gone from strength to strength over the intervening decades. Europa Editions is the fruit of that grand history; it's an extension, if you will, of Edizioni E/O's original project, and a testament to Sandra Ozzola and Sandro Ferri's vision, courage, and belief in the strength of stories."

The New York house that Reynolds has so faithfully nurtured as a type of offspring of the Italian company has looked like a nonstop success story for most of these 20 years.

"That's very kind," Reynolds says. "And surprising! And, of course, those times come around quite frequently. Europa is proudly, stridently independent, with a small-press way of going about pretty much everything. At the same time, our business depends on publishing hits with some regularity. It's what allows the rest of the program to thrive. And we can do it, we have been doing it, and we'll do it again.

"When we started off, very few people believed that Europa Editions would succeed," he says. "Many warned Sandro and Sandra that it was a bad business move, and when

things were starting to go well for them in Italy no less.

"Books in translation? 'American readers aren't interested,' they said.

"A program that mixed up books in translation with books by writers working in English? 'Even worse,' they said. 'A Frankenstein's monster of a publisher!'

"Trade paperback originals (our preferred format for the first decade-and-a-half)? Critics won't review them, readers won't respect them,' they said.

"Insisting and persisting with authors in whom we believe, for years, even when the early results in the market are disappointing? Suicide,' they said.

"Europa has shown several times that those truisms exist to be challenged and that there are different ways of doing business as a publisher and succeeding at it," Reynolds says.

"To have provided proof positive that some of the shibboleths of American publishing are nothing more than that seems to me something to be proud of."

And what of the lay of the land in the United States for translation—often described as a hopeless market where only 3 percent are books in translation?

"The point surely is to choose well and publish well and have readers read and enjoy the books," he says. "None of that is dependent on how many titles in translation are released every year.

"We should be looking moreover at how widely non-American books are reviewed, if the ecosystem of editors and agents and publishers are working together to bring them to market, whether retailers are supporting them, if the prize-giving bodies are acknowledging them, and, finally, if a significant number of readers are reading them.

"And, yes, I think things have changed in all those areas. There is greater bibliodiversity in the American book ecosystem today, for sure. I should add that it is almost all thanks to the work of independent publishers, although of course it doesn't hurt when a corporate imprint takes a swing at a book translated from another language.

"I think Europa has played a role over these 20 years," Reynolds says. "From the start, we have been very focused on books for readers. That may sound obvious; I don't think it is. We've tried to find books that have really spoken to readers in their original markets. Without publishing down, without betraying

our own—idiosyncratic, subjective, fallible—sense of what is a good, deserving book, we have tried with our publishing program to create bridges between not only a writer and her readers, but between readerships.

My favorite stories from readers of are those where a book has provided a moment of connection between them and readers of that same book in another country or another language. It gives me hope that we are not so isolated and siloed off from one another. If there is that common ground between us, then there is hope."

"I give credit again to Sandro and Sandra for not resting and not allowing me or anyone else at Europa to rest on our laurels. There have been moments when we were before a fork in the road: keep doing or trying to do what has proven successful for us, find a formula and repeat it; or, try something different, add something new, look in new places for new ideas and new voices. Fortunately, we have almost always chosen the latter. And the editorial and financial foundation of Europa has grown more robust as a result.

"Modest but frequent innovation rather than repetition. That's the trick! I don't know what the next thing for Europa will be, but I would like to think that we will continue looking for it and not get stuck in a rut."

***"I don't believe the point was ever merely to print and distribute more books from other countries. The point surely is to choose well and publish well and have readers read and enjoy the books."***

—Michael Reynolds



# Stefano Mauri on GeMS at 20: 'Pause' Is Not in Our Vocabulary

*'Accompanying authors to success is perhaps the most rewarding activity in our profession,' says Stefano Mauri, the chief of Italy's GeMS publishing group on its 20th anniversary.*

By Porter Anderson

## Two Decades of Italian Publishing

This week marks the 20th anniversary of the Italian publishing power called GeMS, and many here at Frankfurter Buchmesse are marking these two decades of growth and success. At *Publishing Perspectives*, we're glad to have this exchange with Stefano Mauri—president and CEO of Gruppo editoriale Mauri Spagnol, created in October 2005 in a merger that resulted in GeMS comprising 11 publishing houses.

As such, GeMS is Italy's second-largest publishing entity, following Mondadori. And as it turns out, it's the group's actual size and breadth that has helped buoy it along for 20 years.

**Publishing Perspectives:** Stefano, some might look at a conglomeration of 11 publishing houses—21 imprints—and wonder how you've succeeded for two decades. Has there ever been a moment when GeMS' guiding values of "unfettered creativity and independence" gave you a pause?

**Stefano Mauri:** The diversity and variety of many imprints makes it possible to adapt to the changes of the readers' taste. 'Pause' is not in our vocabulary, just like for many front-list trade book publishers. Be it wishful or sharp thinking, we have never thought that the ebook was going to dominate book reading. Nonetheless we founded companies like Edigita in charge of the repository of 354 publishers, connected with 241 stores to better exploit the ebook market.

**PP:** Thanks to Messaggerie Italiane's controlling interest (and Emmelibri as part of the group), your dominance in distribution comes to what we understand is more than 60 million copies going into bookstores and supermarkets, yes?

**SM:** Our distribution by Messaggerie Libri, one of the companies controlled by Emmelibri—also the oldest and the largest in the group—is the same that we offer to 800 publishers. We've been granting wide access to the market and the due payment to many publishers for more than 100 years. We have the best distribution technologies and unique customer know-how. Besides that, Emmelibri is a partner or controlling company in all the channels in which books are sold, reaching up to 12,000 points of sale. It's the leader in wholesale and mass market distribution and controlling a chain of bookstores and a franchising operation counting altogether more than 200 bookshops. One every two trade books in Italy at some point is handled by at least one of our companies.

**PP:** What has been your happiest surprise in running GeMS for 20 years?

**SM:** Maybe the fact that just after including Bolati Boringhieri among our publishing houses, The Red Book by CG Jung came to light. A mag-

nificent volume and an authentic publishing triumph. A great gift from destiny.

**PP:** And what has been the biggest headache? --what's the challenge you absolutely didn't see coming?

**SM:** We did not see the pandemic coming like anybody else, but I think we acted wisely in that occasion. Thinking back to those days still feels unreal, a dystopian moment in our lives. But books came out stronger when civilized humans had to think better about their fundamentals and the quality of life. The next surprises will come from AI. I think that like the Web itself and smartphones, it will change our lives in a manner difficult to predict.

**PP:** Does running a collection of 11 independent publishers at times present special issues that other publishing executives may not worry about?

**SM:** Yes of course. That's why we have four publishers and/or CEOs, each of them in charge of at least four imprints. Each has his own focus and way to lead his group and then each imprint has an editorial director who is free to choose what and how to publish. Consequently, there are two nodes of freedom, which make the four areas in some way different, and then again 21 editorial directors with their different tastes and cultural backgrounds and goals.

**PP:** And have you ever had another publishing executive say how much he envies you having 11 publishers at work?

**SM:** Actually not. But thanks to the diversity, some of the 21 imprints is always in the chart, no matter how the market is changing. That might be a reason to envy.

**PP:** Do you find that your publishing houses become jealous of each other? -- do you have to say, as parents do to children, that you love them all equally?

**SM:** Of course from time to time some are more successful and some are less. This is a gambling business in some aspects. However there's a positive aspect: there are always good examples to look at within the group.

**PP:** And on the other hand, is a little competition for approval a good thing in motivating your 11 houses to do their best work?

**SM:** I've been working for decades with the other publishers, hence we have a deep legacy to the plans and a common language. Also, they all feel responsibility for the whole group as well. To make an example Marco Tarò is CEO of GeMS and publishers over five imprints and we have been working together since 1988. Some internal rivalry may be natural, even beneficial. We discourage it when it becomes pathological

**PP:** What is your proudest first for GeMS over the years?

**SM:** It's impossible to name just one. The phenomenology of a publishing house is so rich. And we've had a lot of luck. Our authors have challenged great powers, and we have been sued [by parties] from the government to the Vatican to large industrial groups. That's what independence is crucial for. We've discovered the talent of countless authors and changed their lives. On Mondays they were unknown, and by Sundays they were at the top of the bestseller list.

After years of high-profile ventures failing everywhere, together with a group of journalists, we founded a new newspaper that has had extraordinary success. Our authors have won all the most prestigious awards. We founded from scratch a publishing house in Spain that grows every year as well, just thanks to our know-how, passion, and hard work. We founded an e-book distributor that greatly facilitates the work of publishers and platforms by connecting more than 500 publishers lists to 250 stores online.

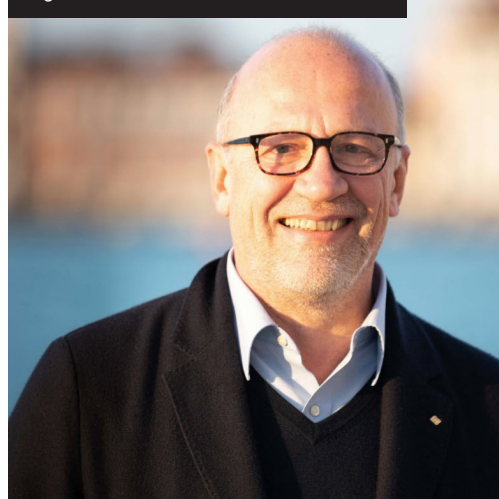
We published the book of a young woman, Erin Doom, which became the first Italian No. 1 film in Netflix's international list. We have been one of the main actors in founding Bookcity, a very successful book event in Milano. The book written by a teacher in Palermo—Stefania Auci—became No. 1 on the list the year it was published and a television series for Disney later on.

Accompanying authors to success is perhaps the most rewarding activity in our profession.

**PP:** And how soon can you start making plans for the 40th anniversary?

**SM:** I believe that 25 is a fine milestone too, and I'll quite likely be here to celebrate it.

Image: Umberto and Elisabetta Mauri Foundation



## Quick guide to stages:

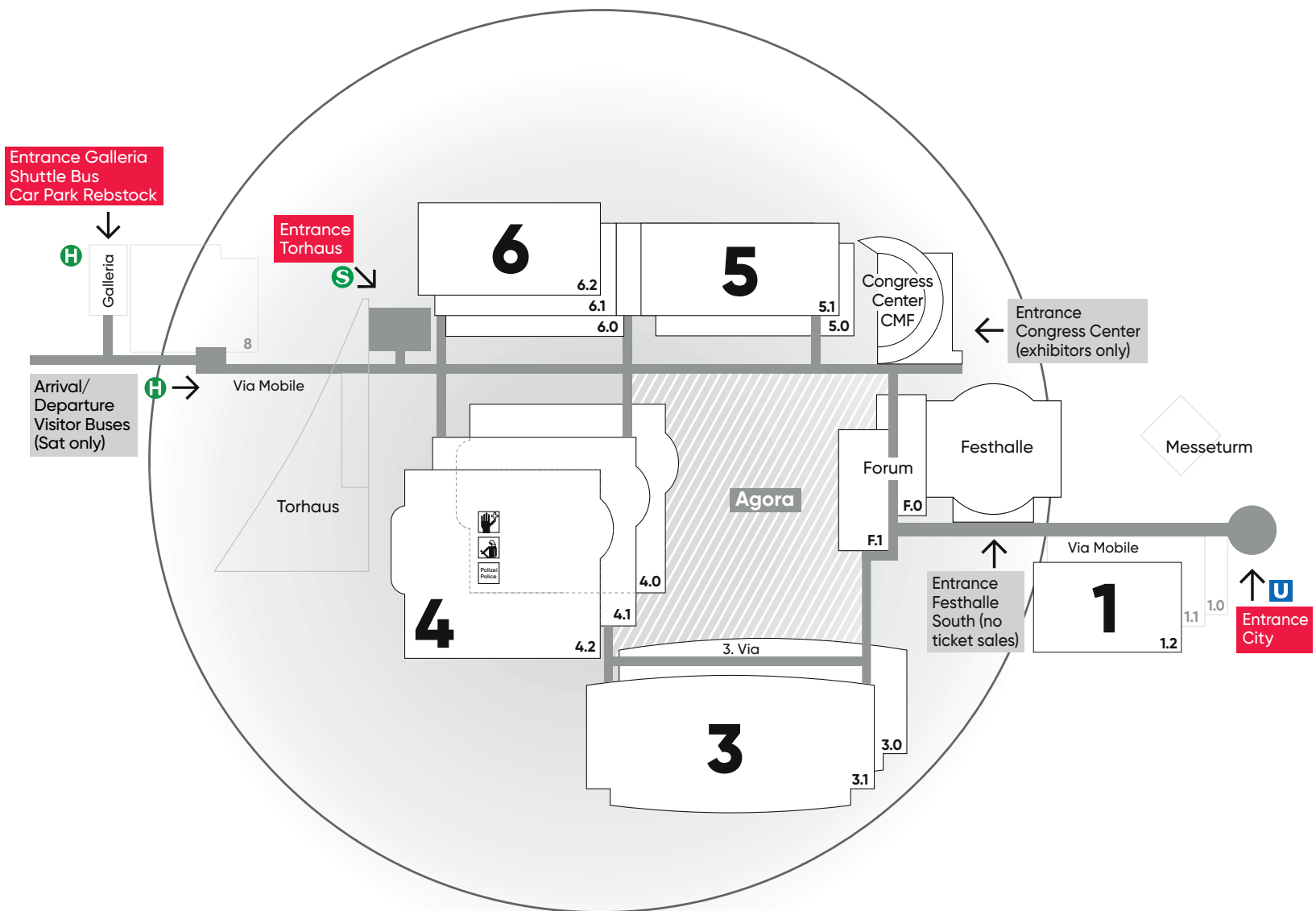
**Asia Stage** – Hall 5.1, A75

**Frankfurt International Stage** – Foyer Halls 5.1/6.1

**Frankfurt Studio** – Hall 4.0 Foyer

**Innovation Stage** – Hall 4.0, H106

**Literature and Translation Stage** – Hall 4.1 F21



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<b>ARD, ZDF, 3sat</b>	<b>Forum 0</b>	<b>Fiction &amp; Non-Fiction</b>	<b>1.2, 3.0, 3.1</b>	<b>Literary Agents &amp; Scouts Centre (LitAg)</b>	<b>6.2</b>
<b>Art, Architecture, Design</b>	<b>3.1</b>	Collective Exhibition	<b>3.1</b>	<b>Meet the Author (Fri-Sun)</b>	<b>Festhalle</b>
International Book Art	<b>3.1</b>	Independent Publishers		Festhalle Pop-Up	
<b>Audio</b>	<b>3.1</b>	Dark Romance, Fantasy, New Adult	<b>1.2</b>	<b>Press Centre</b>	<b>Torhaus</b>
Collective Exhibition	<b>3.1</b>	Reading Zone of Independent Publishers	<b>3.1</b>	<b>Publishers Rights Centre (PRC)</b>	<b>6.2</b>
Audio Books		<b>Frankfurt Studio</b>	<b>4.0 Foyer</b>	<b>Publishing Partners</b>	<b>4.0</b>
Frankfurt Audio	<b>3.1</b>	Frankfurt Studio Pop-Up	<b>4.0 Foyer</b>	<b>Religion</b>	<b>3.1</b>
Hörbuch Bühne (Sat & Sun)	<b>3.1</b>	<b>Games</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>Self-help Books</b>	<b>3.0</b>
Workstation	<b>3.1</b>	Games Business Centre	<b>6.1</b>	Collective Exhibition	<b>3.1</b>
<b>Awareness- /Anti-Discrimination-Team</b>	<b>4.1 Foyer</b>	<b>German Publishers &amp; Booksellers Association Centre</b>	<b>4.0</b>	Self-help Books	<b>3.1</b>
<b>Calendars</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>Guest of Honour Philippines</b>	<b>Forum 1</b>	<b>Stationery &amp; Gifts</b>	<b>3.0</b>
<b>Centre of Words – Literature &amp; Translation Stage</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>International Exhibitors</b>	<b>4.1, 5.0, 5.1, 6.0, 6.1</b>	<b>STM &amp; Academic Publishing, Business Information</b>	<b>4.0</b>
<b>Centre Stage</b>	<b>4.1</b>	African Countries	<b>4.1</b>	Innovation Stage	<b>4.0</b>
<b>Children's &amp; Young Adult Media</b>	<b>3.0</b>	Arab World	<b>5.1</b>	<b>Tourism</b>	<b>3.1</b>
Illustrators Corner	<b>3.0</b>	Baltic States	<b>4.1</b>	<b>Workstation</b>	<b>3.1, 4.0, 4.1, 6.1</b>
<b>Comics</b>	<b>3.0, 6.1</b>	Central & Eastern Europe	<b>4.1</b>		
Comics Business Centre	<b>6.1</b>	English-speaking Countries	<b>5.1, 6.0, 6.1</b>		
<b>Education</b>	<b>3.1</b>	Latin America	<b>5.0</b>		
Forum Education	<b>3.1</b>	Nordic Countries	<b>4.1</b>		
<b>Education (International)</b>	<b>4.0</b>	Romance Languages	<b>5.0</b>		
		Southeast Asia	<b>5.1</b>		
		Southern Asia	<b>5.1, 6.0</b>		
		Southern Europe	<b>4.1</b>		
		Asia Stage	<b>5.1</b>		
		Frankfurt Global Network	<b>4.1</b>		
		International Stage	<b>5.1/6.1 Foyer</b>		
				State of planning: August 2025 Subject to change.	

# PRH Grupo Editorial's Roberto Banchik: Mexico Has a Big Opportunity in Exports

*After 2024's major unit sales for books, the Mexican market looks to work on transportation and distribution costs, along with piracy, amid industry consolidation.*

By Talita Facchini

Penguin Random House Grupo Editorial has worked in the book industry for 25 years, has attended around 20 editions of Frankfurter Buchmesse, and has served as led Penguin Random Mexico for nearly 15 years. He also sits on both the executive committee and the free- dom to publish committee of the International Publishers Association (IPA).

Looking at his decade-and-a-half in the Mexican book industry, Banchik tells Publishing Perspectives, "There are really two sides: the textbook publishing industry and the trade book publishing industry, and they've developed in very different ways in Mexico.

"In trade books, there's been a lot of consolidation, similar to what has happened internationally. For example, at Penguin Random House in Mexico, we've consolidated with other publishers, usually European ones, after mergers in Europe or England, and we've benefited from that.

"There are fewer players today, with the big ones like Penguin Random House and Planeta, and then smaller players. Many local Mexican publishers have had a very difficult time over the past 10 years adapting to new technologies, the changing political environment, and shifts in government policies. So for trade books, it's consolidation, and for smaller local publishers it's hardship.

"As for textbooks, they used to be a very strong and growing sector mainly because the government purchased large quantities of books at low prices. This kept the Mexican textbook market buoyant for a long time. But around seven years ago, when the new left-oriented government came in, they decided to stop working with private publishers and take over everything themselves. As a result, many textbook publishers struggled, and the market shrank dramatically. Today, it's only about 10 percent of what it used to be. In Mexico, 90 percent of the education market is public. So it's been very challenging for textbook publishers."

As for the more immediate time frame, "last year was probably a record year for unit sales of books in Mexico," Banchik says. The market grew around 12 to 13 percent. This year, however, it has slowed down a lot.

"Looking at Nielsen data in September, in unit sales, the market grew just 2.6 percent. In terms of value, it grew 6.7 percent, but with 4-percent inflation, that means the growth comes from prices, not from units sold. So the market is basically flat.

Meanwhile, other Latin American markets are showing different results, he says. "Colom-



bia is growing at double digits with amazing numbers. Argentina was doing very well with new economic policies and the possibility of importing books.

## Sales Channels in the Post Pandemic Era

For the most part, Banchik says, most physical bookstores in Mexico have recovered from the pandemic.

"They had a really hard time in 2020 and 2021," he says. "We were very worried about the future of physical bookstores, both chains and independents. But in the past two years, as the market started growing again, some bookstore chains have done a fantastic job—Gandhi, for example, which is probably the largest and most important bookstore chain in Mexico—has grown every year.

"Amazon also grew a lot," he says, "and then flattened and has remained stable since then. Amazon is still very important in terms of physical book sales. Online sales of physical books grew significantly and now represent about 20 percent of the market. The other 80 percent of physical sales still happen in bookstores, which is very good news."

In the online sphere, he says, Amazon is the biggest player in books. But some physical bookstores like Gandhi have strong online services, too, and there are completely online platforms—like Mercado Libre—which have

grown a lot in Mexico."

Online sales, Banchik says, are divided into physical books sold online, about 20 percent of the market, then ebooks and audiobooks, which are less than 10 percent of all sales, "probably closer to 8 percent." Penguin Random House, he says, is "probably the largest audiobook publisher in Mexico right now, followed by Planeta and maybe Urano."

He does point out that audiobooks "have now surpassed ebooks for us. That's very good news because audio is a completely different format. It opens the market to people who weren't readers before." Still, he says, "Digital overall is a very small portion of the Mexican market, less than 10 percent. Business and nonfiction sell better in digital, he says, while fiction and children's books are hardly produced in digital formats at all.

"So it's still a very physical market," Banchik says.

"What we do have in Mexico is a huge piracy problem," he says, "both physical and digital. You find pirated books being sold outside metro stations and in informal street markets all over the city. Estimates suggest that four to six out of every 10 books sold are pirated, which is huge. In digital, it's even harder to measure. I know from personal experience: I receive a lot of books through WhatsApp, both mine and from other publishers. It's a very informal kind of piracy in which people don't buy the books. They just share them."



## Current Challenges

In terms of today's biggest challenges to the Mexican industry, Banchik says, "Paper price was a very big issue during the pandemic, but lately, this has not been a problem. The international price of paper has been going down for many months now, and the Mexican peso has revalued against the dollar, like most currencies. The problems are transportation and distribution costs, for two reasons.

"First," he says, "Mexico is a large country and not very well connected. It may take us six days to deliver from Mexico City to Tijuana, on the United States border. Second, the minimum wage in Mexico has been increasing significantly. This is a good thing socially—the government has pushed wages up a lot—but the problem is that inflation is around 4 percent, while minimum wage increases have been around 12 percent. This hits logistics and distribution jobs particularly hard. Costs go up faster than we can raise book prices, since we can only increase prices about 4 to 5 percent. So transportation and logistics have been more of an issue than paper."

Banchik says that the recently levied United States tariffs on Mexico have not had an immediate impact on the Mexican book industry. "We do have a free trade agreement with the US," he says. "Despite all of Donald Trump's rhetoric, the agreement remains in place. He has imposed

tariffs on specific items like aluminum and iron, but overall, there's still free trade between Mexico and the United States. So the tariffs have had no impact on books."

In terms of how he sees opportunities for growth, Banchik predicts that digital will keep growing. "I don't really see a limit there. And within that, audiobooks are a format that will continue to expand.

"A surprising trend is fiction," he says. "Mexico has traditionally been a very nonfiction market—around 50 percent of sales are nonfiction, 25 percent fiction, and about 5 percent children's books outside the school segment. But in recent years, fiction has been growing faster than nonfiction. Audiobooks are growing. And I think children's and especially young-adult books have a lot of potential too.

"Finally, I believe Mexico has a big opportunity in exports. Our industry is strong, we have excellent publishers and book manufacturers, but we haven't done what Spain has done to build a powerful export strategy.

"Spain has been very smart in developing its local publishing industry while also expanding abroad. I think Mexico could do the same, and it's something we've been discussing at the Mexican Chamber of Commerce. It's not happening yet, but hopefully it will."

"Audiobooks have now surpassed ebooks for us. That's very good news because audio is a completely different format. It opens the market to people who weren't readers before. Still, digital overall is a very small portion of the Mexican market, less than 10 percent."

Roberto Banchik

# Legend of the Five Rings

## FROM NEW YORK TIMES BEST-SELLING AUTHOR JULIE KAGAWA & J.T. NICHOLAS

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Emerald Empire is in turmoil...

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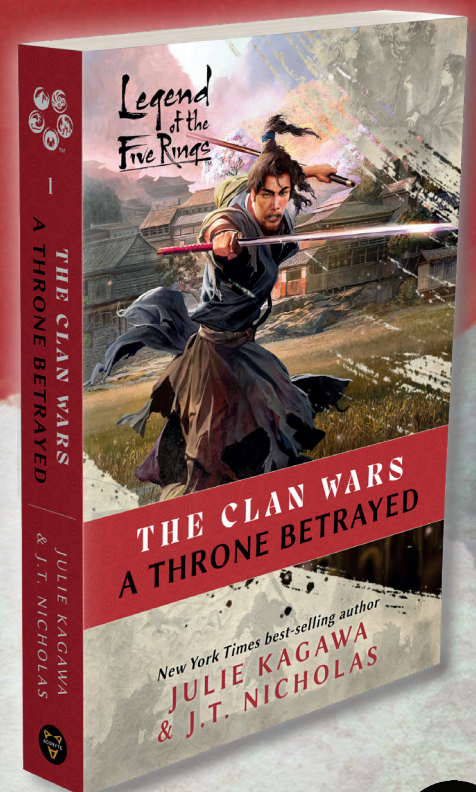
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**Original Title:** A Throne Betrayed  
**Original Language:** English

**Publication Date:** August 2025  
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**Authors:** Julie Kagawa & J.T. Nicholas  
**Cover Illustration:** Mauro Dal Bo  
**Interior Illustrations:** Axel Hutt





# Introducing Taiwanese Fantasy; 'Much Closer to Our Everyday Lives'

*This special blend of fantasy and folklore comes to Frankfurt, with a leading literary rights agent as one of its best representatives (Sponsored)*

By Porter Anderson

## Taiwan's Unique Fantasy: Close, Personal, Real

These days, when people hear about fantasy and folklore—especially book publishing people who are surrounded by "romantasy" and a laundry list of subgenres—it can be surprising how unique this sector of fiction can be.

The Taiwan Creative Content Agency (TAICCA, pronounced "TIKE-ah"), however, would like to introduce you at Frankfurt this year to Taiwan's own brand of fantasy. It draws its distinctive contours from a nearness to both the folk and the lore of this island culture.

Some of the key components have to do with Taiwan's natural environment of soaring, forested mountains, plunging valleys, rolling seas, and urban centers—a land as diverse as the population's multicultural, multi-ethnic society.

And to introduce this to Buchmesse's trade visitors, TAICCA has enlisted one of Frankfurt's most familiar faces. The prolific international rights specialist [Gray Tan](#) [Grayhawk Agency](#) may just surprise you when you hear him say something about the "ghosts and gods among us."

Say what, Gray?

It turns out that nobody is more pleased than the literary agent and rights ace Gray Tan, who tells *Publishing Perspectives* that he's "very excited to talk about this subject, as fantasy is my favorite genre."

And Tan is fully up to the task of explaining the special form of fantasy you're about to encounter at TAICCA's Stand D55 in Halle 6.0.

As an early example of Taiwanese fantasy, TAICCA refers to Wu Ming-Yi's 2011 release, *The Man With Compound Eyes*. It becomes clear why TAICCA's team mentions that book as having introduced Taiwan's fantasy to mainstream international markets when Tan tells you that his agency sold the title into 17 territories. "We sold it as literary fiction," Tan says, "although it does contain strong sci-fi and fantastic elements, and Wu once had a talk with Hugh Howey. The book even received a blurb from Ursula K. Le Guin."

On Frankfurt Saturday (October 18), two 60-minute programs will be offered by the Taiwan team on the topic of fantasy, both set on the International Stage in the foyer between Halls 5.1 and 6.1.

- At 12 p.m. on Frankfurt Saturday (October 18), a presentation titled *Haunted Homelands: Writing Taiwan Through Magic and Memory*, featuring authors Tiong-siong Ou and Kevin Chen with moderator Monika Li. In this session, the speakers will explore how magical realism reveals family, hometown, and history.

- At 1 p.m., also on Saturday (October 18), *The Writing of 'Ling': When Poetry, Boys' Love, and Manga Meet Taiwan Folklore*. The speakers include authors Wu Huaichen, Shi Wu, and Nownow. The hour is to feature poetic Austronesian myths, the witchcraft and ghost marriages found in boys' love fiction, and/or female ghosts in comics.



## Gray Tan: Between High Fantasy and Real World

"When we talk about fantasy in Taiwanese literature," Tan says, "I think it's important to note the distinction between high fantasy—i.e. set in a secondary world like *Lord of the Rings* and *A Game of Thrones*—and fantasy set in the real world with supernatural elements."

Most fantasy readers grew up reading *Lord of the Rings*, the 'Harry Potter' series—which is not exactly high fantasy since it's supposedly 'real world'—*A Game of Thrones* or playing games like *Dungeons & Dragons*, *Final Fantasy*, *Dragon Quest* etc. When these readers turn to writing, almost inevitably it's high fantasy. Everyone wants to create his or her own Middle-earth or Westeros. There have been many such attempts but very little success.

A lot of such stories have to be published under the guise of Japanese-style 'light novels' since it's the only category open to submissions. Most mainstream publishers, even the few science-fiction/fantasy publishers, don't really consider local authors."

This is likely why, Tan says, so many Taiwanese fantasy novels are set in the real world, "but with ghosts and gods among us."

"Culturally it's more resonant," he says, "more accessible to readers. And much closer to our everyday lives. For many writers, this is also a conscious move to write 'Taiwanese' stories—stories that are rooted in our own culture and reflecting our colonial history (from Dutch, Japanese, and mainland Chinese people) and current political climate (the constant fear of China's invasion) and of course a major focus on folklore, indigenous culture, environmental issues."

Several other cultures, Tan notes, have localized versions of high fantasy. In these instances, he mentions Japan's Record of Lodoss War and Drag on Quest. Korea has Lee Young-do's *Dragon Raja*, with an online game to bolster its success. "Not Taiwan," he says. And he has some apt comments on some of the key titles that the Frankfurt program is highlighting. Kevin Chen's *Ghost Town* is a contemporary example of a newer generation of writers' work. Chen and other authors explore gender, politics, and social change in their work.

Gray Tan says, "We sold Kevin Chen's *Ghost Town* magical realism element—13 territories and counting."

The book's story is set in a small town in central Taiwan. Its name means "Eternal Peace." It is the birthplace of Chen Tien-Hong, the youngest of seven siblings and result of parents who desperately wanted a son but instead got only daughters. Yet he turns out to be gay, so of course he had to

*The Wizard*, by Shi Wu and illustrated by Uri, is described as a "light novel," and deals with an 18-year-old, Cheng Jinxi, who is accused of murdering a dozen of his relatives in a single night. It has sold not only its television rights but also a fine group of translation rights into English (LoveLove), German (Tokyo Pop) Thai (SMM), Vietnamese (Daisy Books), and Korean (Taerangbooks).

*Guardienne*, written and illustrated by Nownow, is a 2020 winner in the best new talent category of the Golden Comics Awards. Descriptive material about it says, "In the Taiwan of the early 1900s, the happiness of a married woman depended on providing a son. Doing so became an obsession, involving various rituals. Nownow combines traditions and history to provide a visually ravishing look at the lives of women in Qing dynasty Taiwan."

And *The Divine Flesh I* is written by Teensy and translated by William Sack, as the tale of "a troubled human avatar of a powerful god who discovers that a once-defeated enemy is again preparing Earth for the arrival of a dark power."

Gray Tan at the Graywolf Agency says, "We sold *The Divine Flesh* to Korea in a big deal. We expect a lot of good things next year when the Netflix series is released."

343 original titles from 46 publishers and more will be at the Taiwan pavilion in Hall 6.0, D55, which has its opening on Wednesday at 4 p.m. The team is to include six authors (including Kevin Chen, Nownow, Katniss Hsiao) and eight rights professionals.

Taiwan will be featured in nine events on Frankfurt's Asia Stage, Hall 5.1, A75.





# France's David Meulemans: A 15-year Frankfurt Veteran

*At Paris' Les Forges de Vulcain, David Meulemans likes to buy an international text prior to its translation, to work on the editing.*

By Eric Dupuy

## 'We're Really an Author-Focused House'

David Meulemans arrives at Frankfurter Buchmesse this week with an ambitious editorial experiment.

His independent French publishing house, Éditions Les Forges de Vulcain, is presenting *Doppelgänger*, a novel that challenges traditional translation-rights models. It positions smaller publishers as cultural innovators on the international stage.

The project exemplifies Meulemans' conviction that independent houses can create significant cultural impact through careful editorial work and international vision. Written originally in Spanish by the Catalan playwright Gerard Guix, *Doppelgänger* underwent an intensive two-year editing process that reduced the manuscript by nearly a third.

"Usually, when we publish foreign literature," Meulemans says, "we buy a foreign title and translate it after it's already been exploited in another territory. Here, the idea was to buy a foreign text before it was even exploited, in order to work on the editing."

The collaborative editing involved Guix, the French translator Carole Fillières, and a Colombian editor, Alejandro Ferrer. This approach allowed Les Forges de Vulcain to demonstrate French publishing's editorial expertise while creating what Meulemans terms "a text designed to be European."

*Doppelgänger* addresses the end of World War II and contemporary far-right resurgence—themes with particular resonance across Europe. The novel combines rigorous documentation with operatic structure, reflecting Guix's background as Catalonia's leading contemporary playwright and winner of the 2024 prize for best Catalan play.

Already longlisted for France's 2025 Médicis Prize for foreign literature, *Doppelgänger*

has generated substantial international interest ahead of Frankfurt. The book is being marketed in Spanish rather than French, reflecting growing international demand for Spanish-language content.

"I've realized something rather sad," Meulemans says: "We have more and more foreign publishers who speak Spanish better than French." He cites recent experience at the Prague Book Fair where Spanish versions of texts generated more interest than French editions.

## Fifteen Years of Frankfurt Strategy

Meulemans this year attends his 15th consecutive Frankfurt, an unusual trajectory for an independent French publisher. Unlike many French houses that view Frankfurt as a distant objective, Les Forges de Vulcain prioritized international presence from its 2010 founding.

"From the very beginning, Frankfurt was important," says Meulemans, whose international outlook stems partly from his Italian mother and American family connections, plus two years of study in the United States.

His Frankfurt approach combines systematic meetings with comprehensive "market reconnaissance." While agent Milena Ascione, who has represented the house since 2018, maintains packed schedules with half-hour appointments, Meulemans dedicates significant time to floor visits.

"I always force myself to take half a day, even a full day, to visit all the stands," he says. "I haunt Frankfurt, going to stands one-by-one. This strategy serves three purposes: acquiring rights, selling titles, and conducting intelligence on trends in marketing, events, and new technologies."

Since 2023, two Les Forges de Vulcain editors have attended Frankfurt, including Ferrer, whose presence has opened Spanish-language markets for both acquisitions and sales.

## An Independent Model

Les Forges de Vulcain operates with a three-person core team plus seven regular collaborators. The house publishes approximately 10 titles annually, alternating between French and translated works across general and genre literature.

"We're really an author-focused house," Meulemans says. "When an author joins our

catalogue, it's for their entire body of work, with a strong commitment to defend and support them over the next 40 years."

Growth has been driven by French authors like Gilles Marchand, whose novels consistently achieve bestseller status, and international writers including Rivers Solomon and the 2020 US National Book Award fiction category winner, Charles Yu (*Interior Chinatown*).

For titles requiring substantial marketing investment, Les Forges de Vulcain partners with Media-Participations, France's third-largest publishing group, through co-edition agreements.

"Each party invests money in the title and shares the profits," Meulemans says. He values Media-Participations as "the first French group to really think about other media—cinema, audiovisual, video games—and to work extensively internationally, whether in Korea, Japan, or the United States."

## Shifting International Markets

A decade and a half of Frankfurt attendance gives Meulemans perspective on evolving global publishing patterns. He expresses concern about American market insularity.

"I really have the impression that the United States has become a nation-state like any other," he says. "They've somewhat renounced a universal vocation that they might have had in the past."

American market penetration has become increasingly difficult, even among publishers positioning themselves as liberal and internationally minded — "what was previously the domain of the American right, not at all of liberals," he says.

Conversely, he says, emerging markets show promise. Countries across the former Yugoslavia have developed a robust publishing infrastructure—"what we in France call a book chain—a functional book market."

Korea represents a standout success. "What I find quite fantastic is Korea's rise," Meulemans says, crediting a 25-year investment in cultural diplomacy. Korean success spans literature, manhwa (Korean manga), and webtoons, supported by government programs including publisher invitations to Seoul International Book Fair.

"They understood that long-term suc-



David Meulemans. Image: Publishing Perspectives, Eric Dupuy



# Sheikh Zayed Book Award Celebrates 20th Anniversary

***'One of the most dynamic forces driving global recognition of Arabic literature, thought, and scholarship,' Abu Dhabi's award reaches two decades on the world stage. (Sponsored)***

By Erin Cox

## Haruki Murakami: 'An Immense Honor to Me'

Next year marks the 20th anniversary of the Sheikh Zayed Book Award, among one of the Arab world's most prestigious prizes portfolios. This year's suite of honors, awarded in April, were conferred on such notable names as the intensely popular Lebanese author Hoda Barakat, internationally renowned Japanese writer Haruki Murakami, and British historian Andrew Peacock.

"Receiving the Sheikh Zayed Book Award from the United Arab Emirates comes as both a great surprise and an immense honor to me," said Murakami, who was awarded the Cultural Personality of the Year accolade for 2025.

"Arabic is a language with a long and rich storytelling tradition," he said, "and it is a great honor for me that my books have been translated and are being read in Arab countries. I believe that stories are a universal language. It is my sincere hope that by sharing good stories, people can connect with each other and that this can become a force, even if only a small one, that moves the world toward peace."

Since the Sheikh Zayed program's founding in 2006, there have been 136 awards conferred. New award categories have been added to highlight the breadth of stories, research, cultural contributions, and ideas shared in the Arabic world. A translation grant was created in 2018 to help support the publication of Arabic literature in new languages and far-flung markets around the world. And hundreds of international events have been staged to recognize Arabic culture. Two of them will take place this week at Frankfurter Buchmesse.

## 'A Rich and Diverse Legacy Dating Back Centuries'

In its 20 years, the Sheikh Zayed program has gained resonance in many parts of the world. This year's awards received more than 4,000 submissions from 75 countries, with winners from Iraq, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Morocco, the United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom.

"The Sheikh Zayed Book Award has truly established itself as a mainstay in the international cultural and literary calendar, diffusing Arabic language and literature on a broader scale than ever before," said Dr. Ali Bin Tamim, chair of the Abu Dhabi Arabic Language Center and secretary general of the Sheikh



SZBA Winners at 2025 Award Ceremony, Image by Sheikh Zayed Book Award

Zayed Book Award in an interview with *Publishing Perspectives* earlier this summer. "Over the past two decades since its inception, the award has become one of the most dynamic forces driving global recognition of Arabic literature, thought, and scholarship."

The Sheikh Zayed Book Award at the Abu Dhabi Arabic Language Center is an independent cultural initiative administered by the Department of Culture and Tourism of Abu Dhabi with a stated goal of expanding Arabic literature and culture throughout the world. That mission is making headway.

In an interview in *Publishers Weekly* earlier this year, Barakat said, "The organizers of this prize, at all levels, are doing a very serious job of supporting the Arabic language in total freedom and independence, and even with a view to an international dimension, since they are helping publishing houses to translate Arabic writers into all the languages of the world, efficiently and without directives or ideology."

By celebrating the work of these award-winning writers, by supporting publishers around the world who hope to translate this work and bring them to new audiences, and through key events that illustrate the beauty of this culture, this history, this literature and science, the award's organizers hope to build a bridge between the Arab world and many other cultures.

"Arabic literature boasts a rich and diverse legacy dating back centuries—millennia, even," Bin Tamim told *Publishing Perspectives*. "But it faces a host of persistent challenges," he said, "that continue to hinder its global reach, especially in translation. Chief among these is the lack of institutional and market-driven mechanisms to support the sustained translation, distribution, and promotion of Arabic works. Unlike literature in certain other languages, for instance, Arabic titles often face insufficient visibility in major international catalogues and festivals, and limited investment from global publishers."

This week at Frankfurter Buchmesse, the Sheikh Zayed Book Award will host two events. On Friday (October 17), *New Perspectives on Arabic Literature* features Beatrice Gründler, Hakan Özkan, and Maurice Pomerantz, a trio of professors discussing contemporary literary theories developed to shed new light on 1,500 years of Arabic literary history that move beyond conventional interpretations. That session is to be moderated by translator and writer Stephan Weidner.

On Saturday (October 18), this year's Literature Award laureate Hoda Barakat will be in conversation with FAZ editor Lena Bopp about Barakat's award-winning novel, *Hind, or the Most Beautiful Woman in the World*.



# Kristenn Einarsson Is Stepping Away: Almost

*The Freedom to Publish lead at IPA, the founding managing director of the World Expression Forum, will focus on the 'democracy-reading' connection full-time now.*

By Porter Anderson

**'Give the Readers What They Didn't Know They Wanted'**

It will seem odd at first. So central a personality has Kristenn Einarsson been to the International Publishers Association, to its leading-edge Freedom to Publish committee and its Prix Voltaire, to Norway's stance as a nation of enthusiasts in reading and literature, that "stepping aside" doesn't at first make much sense for this guy—at least to the rest of us.

The Iceland-born Einarsson has crafted one of those careers that seems to keep blossoming, and yet, he's going to hold on to one major project as he reaches the end of his IPA term on January 1: The burgeoning new Democracies Depend on Reading program.

What started as a program engaging five European universities from nine countries in its sphere now has 10 universities. Called "Dem-Read" for short, it's the purposeful development of a curriculum for pre-college-age students that uses data-based developments to connect the importance of long-form "immersive" reading as a direct key to the longevity and health of democracy.

"We can learn from research," he says, "and the researchers can get help to set up the activities that they want to study and follow. Together, we can work on the hypothesis, how to attack it. I really like that. It's stimulating and fascinating. I think it's going to work." So do his core associates—all well-known at Frankfurt—Luis Gonzalez (Spain), Miha Kovač (Slovenia), Christophe Blasi (Germany), and Norway's educational apparatus, especially in reading-wise Lillehammer, is watching with keen interest.

How do you get a career that lets you "step away" into a dream project of this kind?

In publishing, Einarsson was CEO of the Norwegian Publishers Association for almost a decade (2011 to 2020); CEO of the Norwegian Book Clubs program (1991 to 2010); chairman of Kunnskapsforlaget Publishing house (2000 to 2008) and then its managing director from 2008 to 2010). He has also been president of the Bjørnson Academy, the Norwegian Academy for Literature and Freedom of Expression, chair of the Norwegian Film Fund (2001 to 2007), chair of the Norwegian Film Institute (2008 to 2012) and a board member of NORLA, the Norwegian Literature Abroad program, from 2018 to 2020.

What's striking about such a raft of accomplishment is for the last eight years, Einarsson has been the Freedom to Publish voice and face of the IPA as chair of the Freedom to Publish committee. In fact, for anyone who

has come into the world publishing business in the last decade, this is the reason the name Kristenn Einarsson stands out.

Each time a publisher was thrown into jail somewhere, each time a government threatened a small press, each time a valued colleague in the world book business was disappeared or detained—or worse—it has been Einarsson's remarkably economical condemnation that followed, the damning, cold wisdom of compassion and morality breaking

“On the 'Democracies Depend on Reading' program he's prioritizing now, Kristen Einarsson says, 'It's stimulating and fascinating. I think it's going to work.'”

through in one after the next media message from IPA's Geneva offices.

With James Taylor directing the Freedom to Publish committee's growingly influential Prix Voltaire and Einarsson's guidance, the trademark, if you will, was remarkable. Einarsson has spoken to presidents and royalty, prime ministers and unabashed dictators with the same icy insight—the ability to reveal the illogic of censorship in a phrase or two.

For the most part, he tells *Publishing Perspectives*, the powerful have remained silent. Effective communication does that to bullies.

And so it was a happy surprise when in 2021 Einarsson established the World Expression Forum, WEXFO, in Lillehammer and immediately started booking Nobel Peace Prize laureates and thinkers of enormous stature for its annual program in the late spring. Immediately developing a major component of youth training as a lynchpin of the WEXFO ethos, he grew the scope of the program in just four years to such stature that his successor as managing director there will be Ingunn

Trosholman, who will leave the state secretary position in the Norwegian prime minister's office to take the watch from Einarsson on January 1.

Having the Norwegian system's support behind him has been huge in all this success, Einarsson agrees, "but also we decided to go to Lillehammer," where he has found such an energetic uptake that he has established in that beautiful lakeside town a firm seat for the development of WEXFO.

When he looks back at a 50-year career, especially one imbued with the grace of the diplomacy and educational efficacy he has developed, the source of one of his most prized bits of advice might surprise you. It came from "the guy who hired me the first time" in what was a booming business in book clubs at the time. The clubs were selling some 40 percent of all fiction being bought in Norway.

"He wanted to talk to me," Einarsson says, about how so much success was at that time being commandeered by the clubs.

"And what he told me was: 'We shall give the readers what they want—and we shall give the readers what they didn't know they wanted.'"

Translated into Einarsson's special Norwegian, this means that the Freedom to Publish committee has to speak to power. It means that WEXFO must embrace the young people who can carry its concerns forward. And it means that "Dem-Reading" may be the way that cultures can generate the literate intelligence to sustain the democracy now threatened in so many places.

When you see Einarsson at Frankfurt this week, thank him for giving the industry some things it may not have known it wanted.



Kristenn Einarsson speaks at IPA's International Publishers Congress at Guadalajara. With him is Slovenia's Miha Kovač an associate on the new 'Dem Read' program in development. Image: *Publishing Perspectives*, Porter Anderson

# Pavlna Juračková: A Rights Manager on Frankfurt 2026 Guest of Honor Czechia

*Having made its own push into international translation rights in 2022, Prague's Paseka is years into its preps for Guest of Honor Czechia at Frankfurt in 2026.*

By Jarosław Adamowksi

## Czechia Is Frankfurt's 2026 Guest of Honor

Pavlna Juračková, the editor and foreign rights manager of the Czech publishing house Paseka in Prague, points first to the eclectic lists of the company's output as part of its success.

As the first independent Czech publishing house, established in 1989," she says, "Paseka has been delivering works of fiction, history, social issues, comics, and children's literature for more than 35 years. Our impact extends beyond the Czech cultural landscape, contributing to a global literary conversation, publishing each title guided by our conviction that books have the power to change the world for the better."

Paseka is the Czech home of several major international authors, including Édouard Louis; Douglas Stuart; Fernanda Melchor; Alice Munro; Vladimir Nabokov; Amos Oz; Salman Rushdie; W. G. Sebald; Timothy Snyder; and Susan Sontag.

"Since its founding, Paseka has released at least 1,600 titles," Juračková says, "with comics and graphic novels forming a notable part of our list. We're the Czech publisher of Kazu Kibuishi; Luke Pearson; Liv Strömquist; Mariko Tamaki; Raina Telgemeier; and Tillie Walden. We also publish original, award-winning Czech graphic novels."

Asked how she sees the upcoming Guest of Honor Czechia program at Frankfurter Buchmesse, she says, "To be the guest of honor is, without a doubt, an opportunity," Juračková says. "If the selection of Czech literature is handled well and the best is put together, Czech literature can gain visibility, and newly established contacts can be maintained into the future."

"Here at Paseka, we've been preparing for this for three years, and so far, it looks like we'll truly be able to offer the crème de la crème of our output in German translation to the Czech organizers who are selecting who will attend the fair. In general, I can reveal that we've managed to maintain both genre diversity and inclusivity (male, female, gay voices), for both children and adult readers. And with a touch of comparative exaggeration, one might add that we are also in tune with the slogan of our upcoming program: 'Czechia: A Country on the Edge.'

Juračková concedes that working in markets outside her own can present issues. "The greatest obstacle is usually the language barrier," she says. "An excerpt in English often isn't enough to make the prose engaging.

That's why an important part of my work is the synopsis, in which all the essentials are presented, from the plot to the motifs and main themes. Of course, the ideal solution would be a full English translation, but as promotional material, this is often unaffordable even for large publishers or agencies abroad.

"There are, however," she says, "many other factors that influence whether a book succeeds overseas.

"Media coverage and domestic readership reception are only one of many aspects an international publisher may take into account. What works in our country may not resonate internationally at all. In choosing a title, elements such as the personal preferences of a non-Czech editor, the profile of the publishing house, the theme and treatment of the book, as well as information on rights already sold, national literary prizes, translator reports, and even the availability of an audiobook, theatrical, or film adaptation can all play a role.

"And last but not least," Juračková, "there's the possibility of grant support from the Czech ministry of culture. And this is only a fraction of the entire mosaic of decision-making criteria. It's systematic work, but also something of an alchemy."

Asked if any one genre of Czech literature seems to sell particularly well on international markets, Juračková says, "In my view, the greatest strength of a book often lies in the tension between the local and the universal message it conveys. Marek Torčík achieved this brilliantly in his novel *Memory Burn*, in which the local and universal levels intertwine naturally. For an international publisher, it's precisely this duality that's attractive: the distinctiveness of the Czech context on the one hand, and on the other, the themes that are universally comprehensible and transferable into another cultural provenance.

"I believe the key is not necessarily what you write about but how the narrative is shaped, and whether it succeeds in being approached comprehensively in all its aspects.

"I was very inspired," she says, "by one Danish editor who, when asked what's most important in choosing a title, answered with a single word: 'complexity.' Authors should not be afraid to be complex, and this, in my opinion, is precisely what Jonas Zbořil's novella *Flora* achieves. Within a relatively short space, Jonas managed to capture a wide spectrum of themes: environmental issues, the roles in parenthood, infertility, life on ur-

ban peripheries, and civilization—all rendered in a beautifully poetic language.

"As for comics," Juračková says, "I believe the interest is growing every year. Young Czech comic authors and illustrators certainly have a lot to offer, both thematically and artistically. They're original and unafraid to address fresh as well as previously taboo subjects, such as queerness, baldness, or toxic relationships. Several titles from Paseka are currently being prepared in German, English, French, Spanish, Italian, and other language."

"For the export of Czech literature abroad, indispensable partners include, above all, the domestic grant support provided by Prague's ministry of culture, as well as the network of Czech Centers worldwide," Juračková says. "Many international trips to European book fairs are also partly funded by CzechLit, which additionally offers residencies and other activities that complement the mosaic of support available to both foreign and Czech publishers and authors."

And in terms of Paseka's rights sales, the house "began to approach the sale of translation rights in a more systematic way in 2022," she says, "and since then we have concluded more than 100 contracts.

Our biggest literary gem so far is the novel *Memory Burn* (2023) by Marek Torčík, which has been sold into 27 languages. The first translations are being published this year.

"Other titles from our list have also gained remarkable attention abroad, including the novel *Flora* (2024), already sold into 13 languages, with the first translations to appear this year; the children's fiction *Dustopia* (2018), sold into 11 languages; and the graphic novel *Heartcore* (2023), which has already found rights buyers in 10 territories."



Pavlna Juračková of Paseka in Prague. Image Paseka ftw



# Frankfurt's Guest of Honor Chile in 2027: One Market on a Big Continent

*Publisher Nicolás Leyton advises keeping the breadth of the Latin American context in mind*

By Jarosław Adamowski

## A Lot of Opportunities

Chile is set to be Frankfurt's Guest of Honor country in 2027, following Czechia's 2026 program and this year's Guest of Honor Philippines events.

Among those who spoke in Frankfurter Buchmesse's Rights Meeting series of events earlier this year, Nicolás Leyton, a co-founder of the Chilean publishing house La Pollera Ediciones, was among the most focused and articulate in terms international translation and publication rights.

*Publishing Perspectives* had a chance to speak with Leyton on the local Spanish-language industry he knows so well and on what being a guest of honor at Frankfurt can mean to his Latin American home market.

"The invitation for Chile to be the guest of honor," Leyton says, "represents a lot of opportunities—not just for the rights market, but also for the entire publishing industry.

"For example, there are new technologies, ebooks, print-on-demand, audiobooks, and other services that can help modernize the industry.

"Some of these developments haven't fully arrived yet in Chile and Latin America, so I think that the guest of honor holds the possibility for the Chilean industry to be updated, to catch up with the new trends and technologies."

## It's a Huge Territory

Leyton points out that his publishing house was founded in 2010 and already has more than 130 titles published.

"We mainly focus on literature, both fiction and nonfiction," he says.

"We also publish translations of classic and contemporary authors from other languages,

and we publish science and communication books."

Recently, he says, his company's bestselling books have included titles by the contemporary Chilean author Andrés Montero.

"We've already sold the rights to his works to be translated into other languages," Leyton says, "including into Italian, Greek, Arabic, and also in English to a UK-based publishing house. We're doing very well with our contemporary authors."

In terms of challenges involved in publishing books in Chile, "I think the main problem in distribution," he says, "is the lack of metadata.

"None of the Latin American markets is very big but at the same time, we share a common language."

Nicolás Leyton

Nicolás Leyton  
Image La Pollera Ediciones



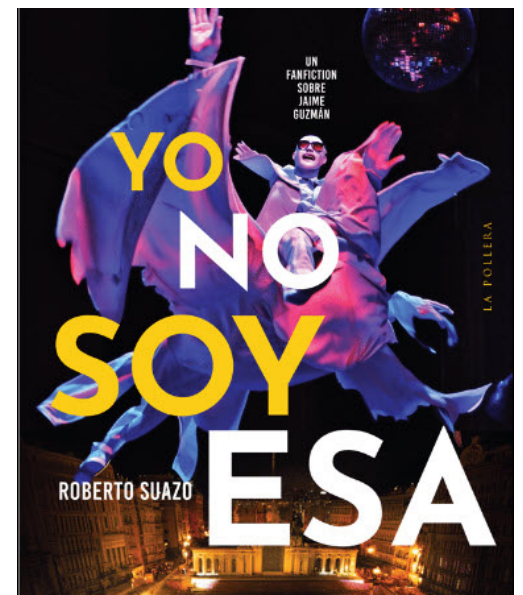
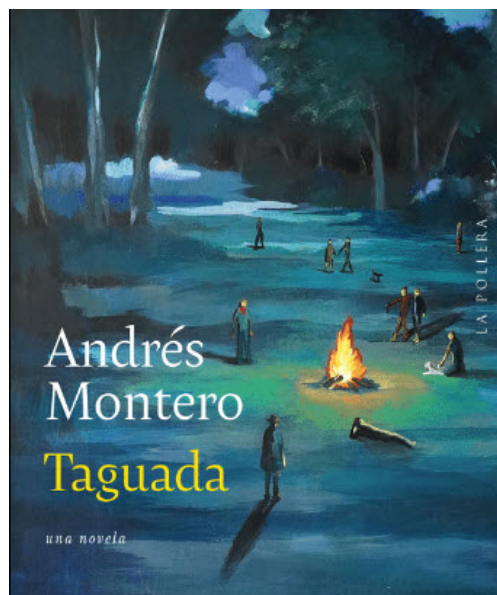
"In the Latin America industry overall, as well as in the Chilean industry, we don't have standard metadata for our books. This is why the necessary information is hard to find, not only for the people who buy books, but also for the people who want to conduct business in the book industry."

For those ready to work ahead toward the 2027 Guest of Honor Chile program, Leyton recommends that they keep the broader picture—the Latin American context and its breadth—in mind.

"None of the Latin American markets is very big," he says, "but at the same time, we share a common language.

"So you must aim not necessarily at just one country. Finding a partner for each country can be an option.

"Different publishing houses can then share the expenses of translations and rights. When it comes to buying rights, it's a huge territory. So I think you need to be aware of the significant job that publishers must do here."





# Brazil's Publishing Industry Widens Its Frankfurt Presence, in the Week and Weekend

*Brazil's Book Chamber plans new rights catalogue availabilities, opportunities for professional training, and a public-facing program on the weekend.*

By Talita Facchini

## This Year, 'An Even Stronger Presence'

With a new project making its debut at Frankfurter Buchmesse this week, Brazil continues its mission to expand its presence at the trade fair and showcase its literature to the world.

The Brazilian Book Chamber is once again located in Hall 5.0, Stand A149, in partnership with the ministry of foreign affairs and the Instituto Guimarães Rosa.

This year, 28 publishers and companies are scheduled to join the Brazilian Publishers program — an international outreach initiative run by the chamber in partnership with ApexBrasil and the MRE.

They will be joined by 10 other companies supported by CreativeSP, an initiative that supports São Paulo-based businesses in traveling to international events.

"We're maintaining the same number as last year," says the chamber's president, Sevani Matos, "but we expect at least 15-percent growth in business generated, which underscores Brazil's relevance at Frankfurter Buchmesse."

Also noteworthy is the 14th edition of the books and rights catalogue, which this year honors Indigenous culture.

As a key tool of the Brazilian Publishers program, the catalogue promotes Brazilian authors and works at book fairs and professional meetings worldwide. Rayanna Pereira, Brazilian Publishers' coordinator, says, "The profile of our partner publishers has become increasingly diverse, so we now have a very strong catalogue to offer, one that grows in importance with each edition.

## Opening Doors for Professionals

An area called Faculdade LabPub (Hall 5.0, B149) is expected to stand alongside the Brazil stand, introducing the country's first higher-education institution dedicated to the publishing industry. Founded in 2018 by André Castro and Cassia Carrenho, LabPub offers 65 short courses and six postgraduate programs.

The LabPub program is expected to include discussions about the influence of women in Brazilian publishing, with information based on Nielsen research. There's also to be a lecture on key Brazilian authors, LabPub is also launching its pilot project Passaporte Frankfurt.

In partnership with MVB Latin America and the fair itself, the initiative has brought eight publishing professionals—including authors, translators, narrators, and small entrepreneurs—to Frankfurter Buchmesse for the first time. Its main goal is to show that the fair is accessible to all professionals and stakeholders.

"We want these professionals to experience the fair strategically and gain direct professional benefits," says Carrenho, who has curated a range of publishing events in Brazil. The project received support from the trade show's leadership, represented by Marifé Boix-Garcia, vice president for Southern Europe and Latin America. "With Passaporte Frankfurt," Boix-Garcia says, "we're able to align Frankfurt's mission of giving greater visibility to Latin America and LabPub's ambition to expand internationally."

Ahead of their arrival, participants have had four preparatory sessions covering key aspects of the fair including professional meetings. At Frankfurt, they'll present their proj



Image: CBL

ings, catalogues, and how the trade show works. At Frankfurt, they'll present their projects at the Brazil stand and join guided tours of Frankfurt Messe, meeting some of the industry's publishers and companies' players firsthand.

## A New Weekend Program

The biggest innovation in Brazil's presence this year, however, will be a public-facing program on the weekend.

"For the first time," says the chamber's Matos, "we'll have books for sale at our stand, as well as special programming designed for the public during the weekend."

In addition to matchmaking sessions, professional panels during the week, and the traditional Caipirinha Hour (October 16 at 5 p.m.), Brazil is preparing open events with readings and literary encounters to strengthen its connection with readers and deepen its presence at the fair.

"We've noticed the demand, especially from Brazilians living in Germany who attend the fair and ask for this kind of initiative," Pereira says. "We already leave a library of Brazilian books at every international fair, but we felt it was time to have an even stronger presence."

AT BRAZIL'S 2024 STAND AT  
FRANKFURTER BUCHMESSE.  
IMAGE: CBL





# The Effort to Make the EU AI Act Effective for Rights Holders

*The Act 'left some important details to be worked out later,' says the Börsenverein's Jessica Sängner*

By Porter Anderson

## Big Tech: 'No Interest in an AI Act With Teeth'

An open letter of protest launched this summer by more than 40 of the most prominent organizations of publishers, producers, performers, authors, and other rights-holders charged that the European Artificial Intelligence Act's implementation measures "fail to address the core concerns [of] our sectors—and the millions of creators and complaints active in Europe which we represent."

*Publishing Perspectives*—in order to get a deeper look at where the EU AI Act's implementation measures may be falling short—has put several questions to Jessica Sängner, the director for European and international affairs at Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels.

*Publishing Perspectives:* Jessica, the public letter of objection says that "the feedback of the primary beneficiaries these provisions were meant to protect has been largely ignored in contravention of the objectives of the EU AI Act as determined by the co-legislators and to the sole benefit of the GenAI model providers that continuously infringe copyright and related rights to build their models." Does there seem to have been such resistance to the objections of the field?

*Jessica Sängner:* When Europe's AI Act was drafted, provisions were introduced to provide rights holders with transparency around the use of copyright-protected works by GenAI models. But the co-legislators dodged the question of precisely what model providers must disclose and left it to other bodies to work on the details.

In the current political climate, where it seems that "innovation" must be fostered at all costs, creators and rights holders—those who are innovators by nature of what they do—are being framed as obstructing "progress" when they defend their rights against Big Tech companies that have been stealing their works. And yes, those companies do powerfully resist anything that could help rights holders make them accountable or force them to be transparent about use of copyright-protected works in the future. They have no interest in an AI Act with teeth.

*Publishing Perspectives:* Is this akin to the big debate that raged in London when MPs repeatedly tried—and then failed—to achieve opt-in requirements for the use of copyrighted material and complete transparency as to what works a large language model might be trained on?

*Jessica Sängner:* The debate in the UK is indeed about the same core question: Do rights holders still have control over their exclusive rights, or is the AI sector going to be given carte blanche to secretly use millions

of works without permission?

The copyright-related obligations on GenAI model providers in the EU's AI Act are expressly designed to facilitate the exercise and enforcement of rights holders' exclusive rights by providing transparency. The TDM [text and data mining] exceptions introduced in the EU by the CDSM Directive of 2019 [the Directive on Copyright in the Digital Single Market] have already limited rights holders' choice to opt in to many uses by AI developers. They instead introduce an opt-out requirement for TDM when it is not conducted for the purpose of research.

The scope of this exception is debated, and unfortunately, opting out can be burdensome for rights holders. To make matters worse, we are seeing crawlers simply ignoring or circumventing machine-readable opt-outs. All this shows that sticking to the basic principle underpinning copyright of opting in—requiring permission for AI uses—would be a very sensible path for the UK.

*Publishing Perspectives:* The signatories to the objection say that they're dissatisfied with Europe's published GPAI Code of Practice, the GPAI guidelines, "and the template for disclosure of a sufficiently detailed summary of training data under Article 53 of the EU AI Act."

*Jessica Sängner:* As I mentioned, the AI Act itself left some important details to be worked out later.

It mandated the AI Office of the European Commission to facilitate the development of Code of Practice (CoP) which could help put certain obligations into operation. The working group of stakeholders that was set up to produce the CoP was huge – there were about 1,000 members. With meetings held online, this format did not allow for real discussion among the stakeholders. The drafting was therefore entirely in the hands of the working-group chairs.

The Big Tech companies were provided with a separate forum where they were able to discuss directly with the chairs—a privilege not afforded the rights holder group. This was a concerning scenario from the start, so we made sure to provide detailed and constructive written input at every opportunity, speaking with one voice as the Federation of European Publishers (FEP).

We saw three iterations of a draft for the Code of Practice on copyright, and each one seemed to water down the obligations more than the last. None of our concerns was taken on board. The resulting Code of Practice shows clearly that the exercise was tilted in favor of Big Tech interests, with the AI Office approaching it with a mindset of equating these with "innovation." There was no interest



Jessica Sängner  
image VNTR media

in allowing those who created or published the works used by GenAI to know about such use or enforce their rights. Respect for the IP of the creative sectors was seen as "hindering" the development of AI in Europe.

The Commission was left by the co-legislators to provide a template to GPAI providers, which they are to use when disclosing the "sufficiently detailed summary" of works used in their models as required by the AI Act. The process for developing this essential piece of the puzzle was conducted in a highly opaque process within the Commission.

Through Federation of European Publishers, we provided constructive input whenever an opportunity arose, but the result is a template that operates with quantitative thresholds for disclosure which simply incentivize amassing ever larger hoards of data, as only the top few percent of crawled sources need to be named. The larger the dataset, the more opaque it will be.

Finally, although we were always assured that the Code of Practice was voluntary and adherence would provide no shield against liability, we came across a section in the Commission's FAQ where they promise GPAI developers who sign up for the Code of Practice an extra period during which they won't be scrutinized for compliance with the AI Act. There is no legal basis for such a period of grace, so this, too, is very troubling.

# How Much AI Usage Is Actually Going on in Book Publishing?

***A new study from BISG indicates that while slightly less than half of individuals use AI for work now, the overwhelming majority reported multiple pain points, serious ethical concerns.***

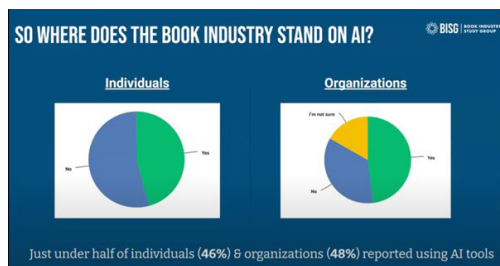
By Porter Anderson

## 'Resistance and Reservations'

One of the things that makes the artificial intelligence question difficult at this point in the international book-publishing industry, is that it's extremely hard to know how much actual use of AI is being made in publishers' offices and operations. While—to the frustration of many in the industry—the Generative AI issues of Big Tech training on vast swaths of copyrighted content without license or payment is all too clear (and frequently tied up in court cases), the happier idea of AI's productivity boosts in, say, back-office operations at a publishing house are an upbeat side of the issue.

And yet, just as transparency is so hard to come by in the Big Tech stand-off, it's hard to get even at "ground level" among many publishing operations on a day-to-day basis. When are publishing staffers using AI productivity tools? Which staffers use them? For what? How often?

Vendors of various "AI services," of course, tend to paint a highly upbeat picture, as publishing professionals know from waves of digital-publishing focus and the now-powerful audio-sector focus. In AI, many vendors cheer various time-saving, staff-freeing gains to be made in daily operations in publishing—and they may be right, someday. On major publishing executive talks of "having coffee with people"—code for being pitched by vendors whose enthusiasm levels may seem ...caffeinated.



But when the United States' Book Industry Study Group (BISG) made a survey of book publishing industry professionals in the United States on the topic of AI usage so far, the picture was less gung ho.

In this study, most respondents work in the United States (75 percent) and Canada (18 percent). There were some 559 respondents overall, with a big 90-percent completion rate across 24 questions. As BISG chief Brian O'Leary and operations manager Brooke Horn

have explained to the BISG membership, that level of return is quite substantial for this organization's study work.

And what arises in this interesting and fresh study—published on September 18—is a picture of a less-than avid response so far. In conversation, you may pick up the impression that publishing houses are hand-over-fist into AI on marketing and royalty statements, for example, but the new study shows that at least in many quarters, the actual state of play might be more "not so much."

Some caveats do pertain here. The data we are going to share with you, thanks to BISG, has not yet undergone the working-group deep-analysis effort that will follow. One of BISG's hallmarks is that it involves industry pros in just such studies so that the most authentic, down to Earth implications and revelations can be established, in all areas of inquiry, not just in AI. So simply be aware that in coming weeks and months, BISG will be refining some of its understanding of the study's initial output.

One more point: The space constraints in our print magazine will allow us only to hit some key points. We'll plan to develop deeper material on BISG's work in analyzing AI usage as the organization refines its work, and as we return to our daily digital production platform, which allows us more space, of course.

Most study respondents here work for publishers (48 percent), libraries (17 percent) and service providers/vendors (7 percent).

And at the high end, just under half of individuals (46 percent) and organizations (48 percent) reported using AI tools.

Looking in at the areas in which respondents said they're using AI, "administrative or operational tasks" led, as expected, at 12 percent. Data analysis was next at 21 percent; marketing was at 19 percent; metadata and title optimization was at 15 percent.

More notes of interest: 31 percent of respondents said they are ethically opposed to the use of AI; 33 percent said they're not interested in using AI to support their work; and 43 percent said AI training is not a good use of their time. Indeed, just 2 percent said they have "no concerns or pain points around AI. The most common, BISG reports involve "inadequate controls around the use of copy righted material (86 percent), hallucinations (84 percent), AI-generated books flooding platforms (81 percent), and in accurate, false, or biased training data (79 percent).



Again in our quick-report form for our magazine here—with a deeper look to follow in our online coverage—here are some of the high-level summary points that the in which BISG's study indicates that the industry needs guidance.

- While slightly less than half of individuals are using AI for work now, the overwhelming majority reported multiple pain points with AI, including serious ethical concerns.
- "The majority of organizations that are using AI lack formal policies or guidelines, and many have yet to institutionally adopt closed and enterprise models to better their data.EAVE (European Audiovisual Film Entrepreneurs);
- There's a lot of work to be done if AI is to be adopted both ethically and efficiently, but that also indicates unique opportunities for the industry to come together and work toward solutions at the front lines."

To repeat, we'll have more in-depth coverage of the BISG study, and we'll stay in touch with working group developments on it, on the other side of Frankfurter Buchmesse. For now, the message from this carefully handled study is that as hot a topic as AI surely is this year, publishers need not feel the need to dive headfirst into areas outside their comfort zones. There is probably "less going on"—to use a phrase from the vernacular—inside publishing's offices and staff breakrooms about AI at this point than buzz might suggest.

## RESISTANCE AND RESERVATIONS

- 31% of individuals are ethically opposed to the use of AI
- 33% of individuals are not interested in using AI to support their work
- 43% of individuals believe that AI training is not a good use of their time
- 34% of organizations are not using AI in any area of their work
- 22% of organizations do not anticipate using AI in any area of their work



# Frankfurt Fellowship: International Networking

Get to know some of this year's participants, who are working across publishing departments and eager to expand their networks and knowledge at Frankfurt. Interviews by Porter Anderson



**Paula Erizanu**  
Moldova  
Cartier Publishing House

"Romanian literature is still on its way to garnering more interest and a stronger international brand. I have been managing rights, both selling and acquiring them, for Cartier since 2011. Cartier is a general publishing house, which publishes fiction, translations, nonfiction."



**Camilla Fesquet**  
France  
Fayard

"When speaking with French publishers, there is a certain amount of concern about the future. I joined the foreign literature department at Fayard in April 2024 before starting to work mainly for Pauvert, an imprint that publishes French and translated literature, as well as literary nonfiction."



**Peter Michalik**  
Slovakia  
Monokel

"For its size, the Slovak market is surprisingly rich in output and varied in themes and styles. As the founder of a children's book publishing house, especially one from a small market, I wear many hats. Yet my role is perhaps closest to that of an art director, shaping the overall purpose, vision, and future development of the company."



**Szu-wei Fu**  
Japan  
Tokuma Shoten

"This year also seems to be a boom for Japanese literature in the international market with such books as *Butter*, *The Night of Baba Yaga*, and others. I believe this momentum will continue to grow, and I hope international readers will explore the unique appeal of Japanese literature. I am responsible for selling the rights to our books in international markets."



**Roxanne Landry**  
Canada  
La Mèche, Groupe d'édition la courte

"In 2025, there is a deceleration in our market of about 5% if we compare to last year, but there are strong initiatives that promote books published in Quebec [that seem promising]. As Rights Manager, I promote our lists, negotiate rights deals and develop our export plan related to rights licensing."



**Joakim Nørregaard**  
Denmark  
People's Press

"Denmark really is an increasingly digitalized book market. While the market is under pressure, we see signs of stabilization, though. I work as an acquiring editor. My main responsibility is to acquire and curate titles for our digital fiction list, but I also edit a selection of Danish authors and handle more literary translated titles."



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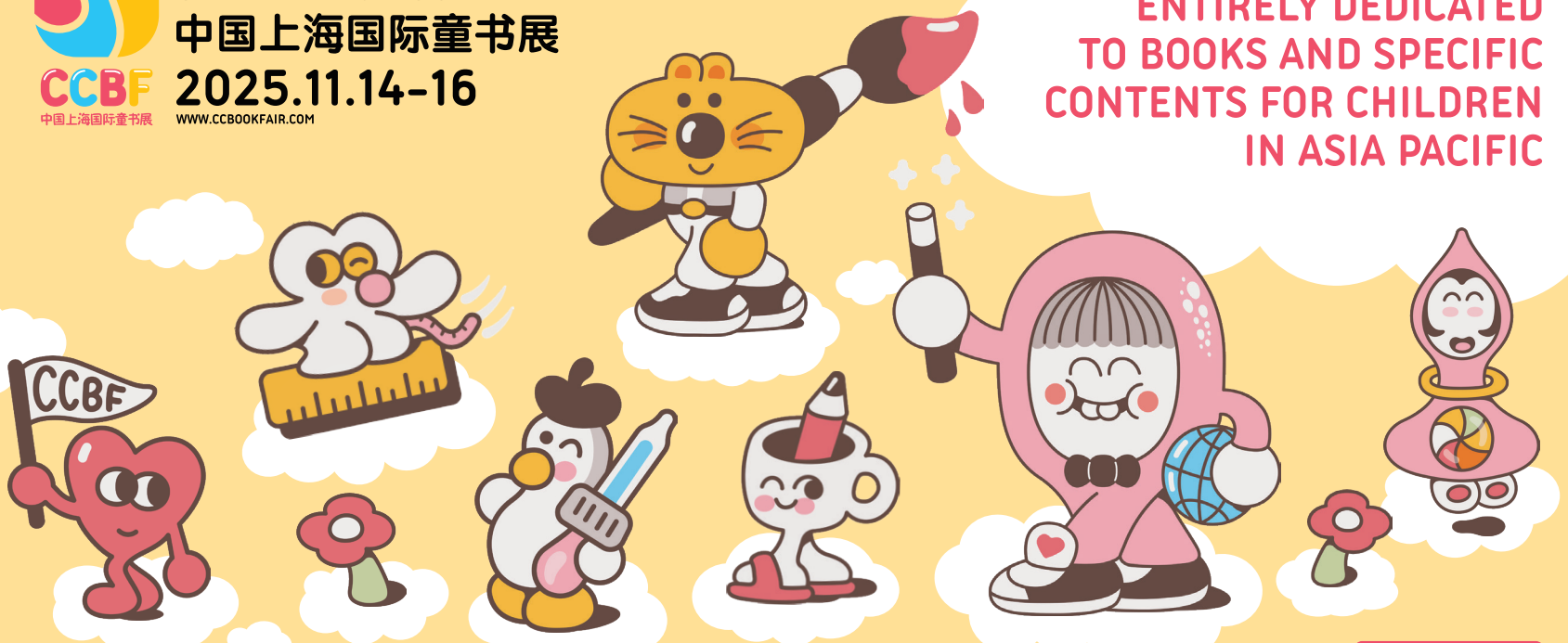


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# PUBLISHING PERSPECTIVES FORUM

## WEDNESDAY, October 15

Frankfurt Studio, Hall 4.0 Foyer

11:00 - 11:45 a.m.

**Executive Talk: Perminder Mann**, CEO, Simon & Schuster UK and International

- In conversation with: Porter Anderson, Editor-in-Chief, *Publishing Perspectives*

3:00 - 4:00 p.m.

**Expanding the Way We Think About Audio** —(in two parts)

**Independent Publishers and Audio: New Voices, Advantages, and Challenges**

- **Sabine Cramer**, Publisher and CEO of Dumont Publishing, Koln
- **Jon Watt**, audio and business development at Bonnier Books, UK, London
- Moderator: **Porter Anderson**, Editor-in-Chief, *Publishing Perspectives*

**Theater of the Mind: Exploring Immersive Worlds and New Audio Experiences**

- **Richard Addis**, Music, Podcast, and Post-Production Partnerships, Dolby Europe
- **Kelly Garner**, Founder Treefort Media
- Moderated by **Nathan Hull**, Chief Strategy Officer, Beat Technology

## THURSDAY, October 16

11:30 - 12:15 p.m. (Frankfurt Studio)

**Executive Talk: Véronique Cardé**, CEO of Hachette Livres' Éditions JC Lattès, Éditions du Masque

- In conversation with: **Porter Anderson**, Editor-in-Chief, *Publishing Perspectives*

## FRIDAY, October 17

11:00 - 11:45 a.m. (Frankfurt Studio)

**Executive Talk: Christian Schumacher-Gebler**, CEO of Bonnier Germany

- In conversation with: **Porter Anderson**, Editor-in-Chief, *Publishing Perspectives*



Executive Talk - Porter Anderson in conversation with Arnaud Nourry

## FRIDAY, October 17

### Charleston Conference at Frankfurt

9:00 - 10:00 a.m. (Hall 4.0 Innovation Stage)

**Case Study Carousel: Real-life Use Cases of AI in Academic Libraries and Publishing**

10 minutes per speaker (4 presenters), with 15 minutes for Q&A - presenting concrete, real-world examples of how AI is being used responsibly in publishing and scholarly communication.

**Confirmed speakers:**

- **Emre Danisan**, CEO EDanex Solutions
- **Carsten Borchert**, CEO SciFlow
- **Max Mosterd**, Co-Founder Producers, Sylla
- **Vikoriya Vasilenko**, Knowledge Gate Group
- **Tiago Barros**, Co-Founder, Signals

Moderated by **Sven Fund**, Managing Director, Reviewer Credits and FullStopp

10:00 - 11:00 a.m. (Hall 4.0 Innovation Stage)

**Round Robin Interview: "US Funding Cuts Imperil Open Infrastructure Globally"**

Building on the conversations at Charleston In Between in Berlin, this fast-paced, round-robin session brings together multiple viewpoints on a critical topic. Each participant interviews the next, creating a lively chain of conversations that comes full circle. The format keeps energy high, perspectives fresh, and the audience engaged throughout.

**Speakers confirmed (at time of printing)**

- **Moderated by Leah Hinds**, Executive Director, Charleston Hub
- **Frances Pinter**, Director, Academic Relations, Central European University Press
- **Nasra Gathoni**, Senior Instructor, Aga Khan University and Chair, Research4Life Equity Committee
- **CEO De Gruyter Brill**, Sp. z o.o. and EVP Product & Publisher Relations, Paradigm Publishing Services
- **Dean Smith**, Director of Duke University Press



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AT FRANKFURT STUDIO HALL 4.0**

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17<sup>TH</sup> 5:30<sup>PM</sup>

## **Classics Today: New Perspectives on Arabic Literature**

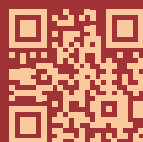
With Beatrice Gründler, Hakan Özkan,  
Maurice Pomerantz and Stephan Weidner

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18<sup>TH</sup> 5:00<sup>PM</sup>

## **Literary Discussion with Hoda Barakat, SZBA 2025 Laureate**

Join acclaimed author Hoda Barakat as she discusses her award-winning novel with cultural journalist Lena Bopp, followed by a live reading

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