



Taking Australian literature to the world

The Australia Council for the Arts explains its new initiatives to assist the publication of Australian authors overseas.

A global success story

Contemporary Australian writers are making their mark with world audiences. Peter Carey has twice won the Man Booker Prize; Thomas Keneally won it with *Schindler's List*. Geraldine Brooks took home the Pulitzer Prize. Kate Grenville has won the Orange Prize, the Commonwealth Writers Prize and has been shortlisted for the Man Booker—as was M J Hyland. Australian poet Les Murray has won the T S Eliot Prize for Poetry.

Markus Zusak had a runaway bestseller in the US with *The Book Thief* and was awarded the Book Sense Book of the Year Award for children's literature at Book Expo America 2007. Tim Winton and Richard Flanagan have been widely translated. Garth Nix is a well-recognised 'genre' author internationally.

Focus on Frankfurt

Now, the Australia Council for the Arts, the Australian government's arts funding and advisory body, is spearheading an international marketing drive for the nation's writers, in partnership with the Australian Publishers Association, Austrade and the Australian Embassy in Germany.

The Australia Council's focus at this year's Frankfurt Book Fair will be raising the profile of Australian writing through targeted promotions, industry events and by ending a key player in Australia's literary landscape to represent the partners. This pilot program is also a fact-finding mission for the Australia Council and will help form future thinking and development plans for engagement with international markets.

Dr Wendy Were, festival director and CEO of the Sydney Writers' Festival, will attend the Frankfurt Book Fair on the Australia Council's behalf to participate in key industry events as well as gather valuable information and contacts. Last year, the Australia Council supported Michael Heyward, publisher

of The Text Publishing Company and member of the Visiting International Publishers (VIP), to join an Australia-Canada publishing mission where he attended key Canadian writers' festivals and met with the Canadian publishing industry and government agencies.

A helping hand

The Australia Council has a vigorous international program of assistance and has supported the translation and publication of more than 300 titles overseas. Through the VIP program, rights have been sold to many overseas markets, and the program's popularity and effectiveness continues to gather momentum. The next VIP gathering will be at Adelaide Writers' Week in March 2008.

Essential to the export skills development of Australian publishers are the grants that the Australia Council provides to publishers to attend overseas book fairs. A number of Australian publishers and literary agents will attend Frankfurt Book Fair with such assistance. They are: ABC Enterprises; Allen & Unwin; Australian Literary Management; Brandl & Schlesinger; Melbourne University Publishing; Penguin; The Text Publishing Company; University of Queensland Press; University of Western Australia Press; and Wakefield Press.

For more information...

Visit the Australian Publishers Association stand at the Frankfurt Book Fair to find out more about Australia's rich literary community. And visit www.ozco.gov.au/fra for more information about great Australian writers. ■

