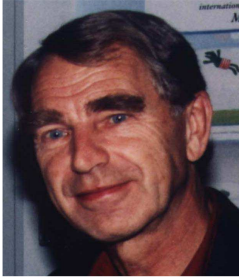


A Publisher's Perspective



Klaus Flugge

I have published translations of children's books ever since I came to Britain in 1961 as publisher of Abelard- Schuman and, since 1976 when I founded Andersen Press, which I had the cheek to name after the greatest writer of children's stories on the Continent. However, the 60s saw many more translated books thanks to the support of the librarians who spent much more money on children's books than they are able to do now.

The general public still seems reluctant to buy books by authors with names that are difficult to pronounce. Maybe that's the reason why Christine Nöstlinger never became very popular in Britain, unlike any other country. She was the first winner of the *Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award* (worth almost £400,000, awarded by the Swedish Government).

It took quite a few years for the books about a loveable Frog by Max Velthuijs to become popular in Britain. Our former sales director used to ask me to change his name to Fieldhouse if I wanted to increase my sales.

There are of course other reasons for the shortage of translated books: the amazing number of children's books written in English, the reluctance of editors to take in books they can't read themselves and the now considerable cost of translation. Quite a few European countries used to underwrite this but budgets for such support have been cut considerably over the last couple of years.

This year Andersen Press will have published three translations, not enough, but already more than most other children's publishers. I very much hope that this excellent catalogue will increase awareness of and interest in the life and literature of other countries.

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Klaus Flugge was born in Germany in 1934. He trained as a bookseller in Leipzig but his political views forced him to flee East Germany in 1953. He arrived in New York in 1957 and worked for Abelard-Schuman who, in 1961, asked him to run their London office. He became Managing Director and Publisher of adult and children's books and began originating his own books, which included titles by Edward Ardizzone, Joan Aiken and David McKee. In 1976, Klaus set up his own publishing company – Andersen Press – named in tribute to Hans Christian Andersen. Andersen Press specialises in picture books and children's fiction and now consists of over 900 published titles, the majority of which are still in print. Klaus received the *Eleanor Farjeon Award*, for outstanding contribution to children's books, in 1999.