

ASIAN PUBLISHERS FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM 2022

2022 아시아 편집자 펠로우십



Today and Tomorrow of the Asian Publishing Industry – with Trends and Keywords

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Welcome Greeting

Hello, everyone! How have you been? I seem to put more welcoming and longing in commonplace greetings as we all have been through the COVID-19 period. I am so glad to greet all of you who are making good books under the name of publishing within the wide fence of Asia, which is so near and yet so far from each other. I sincerely welcome you to this Asian Publishers Fellowship Program, where editors representing each region of Asia have gathered in an era where the value and scope of publishing are expanding.

The Asian Publishers Fellowship Program, which explores the future of publishing with Asian publishers, is celebrating its 13th anniversary this year. Under the theme of “Today and Tomorrow of the Asian Publishing Industry – with Trends and Keywords”, the Asian Publishers Fellowship Program 2022 invited 8 editors from 6 countries: China, Indonesia, Korea, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam. ‘Video presentations’ by the editors sharing their insightful opinion on the publishing trends and changes as well as ‘recommendation of books’ that they want to present to Asian readers, are now on the program website.

Through this Asian Publishers Fellowship Program, which examines new publishing trends and keywords picked by editors in each country, I hope that the Asian publishing industry will become a new protagonist of global culture.

Kim Ji-Young

International Affairs Committee Chairman
Korea Publishers Society

Today and Tomorrow of the Asian Publishing Industry

VIETNAM



Nguyen Hoang Dieu Thuy

dieuthuy@nhanam.vn

Nha Nam Publishing

Publication and Optimizing the Use of Content

I always expect each book published by my company to have many more lives, particularly those that I edited. Therefore, I am so thrilled when any books that I am in charge are made into audio books, plays or movies. Not to mention the revenue, it is a pure joy to see values spreading as literary work is really hard.

Nowadays, optimizing the use of content is among the most important things to do in publishing. It is not something new. However, with the rapid development of technology and consuming life, people working in the publishing industry need to attach more importance to it.

In a way, print book is an original (in most of the cases with some exceptions) and there are derivatives based on this original. Once we have a good content, we can make it into different platforms and types. This is beneficial to all: authors will have more royalty, publishers will have more revenue and consumers will have more choices.

First, the publication of special, **luxury and limited editions** is a way of “intensive farming” of content. Of course, these books may be for displaying rather than reading. However, the content is still necessary to make them valuable publications.

Luxury and limited books have been really

booming in 2021 in Vietnamese publishing industry. Major players in the publishing industry, including Nha Nam, competed with each other in publishing the most beautiful and expensive books. Books were made with high techniques and special materials (goat – leather cover, marbling flyleaf, metallic–printing typo, sophisticated vignette designs, and etc.) The printing of luxury books was often limited to no more than 500 copies each title. And titles that were selected for luxury versions must be classic works of the world or of national culture.

In 2021, A Brief History of Vietnam (Viet Nam su luoc) by scholar Tran Trong Kim was published in a very special edition (Bordeaux–colored and cowhide–leather cover, big size,

golden-printing title and author’s name, hand bookbinding, limited to 111 copies) by Nha Nam with the price of up to over 160 USD per copy. They were sold out at the drop of a hat.

Dong A publisher hold book auctions every weekend and they used to sell a very sole copy of the novel The Godfather by Mario Puzo, at the price of up to 10 thousand USD in an auction in 2021, the highest price ever for a novel so far in Vietnam.

Smaller players who owned good titles and loved to make their own beautiful books also joined this game. For example, Phuc Minh Books launched a five-volume miniature set of the novel The Little Women by Louisa May

Alcott that each one’s size was like a piece of queque cake with marbling silk cover.

Luxury books could be circulated in two ways, publishers retailing on their own distribution channels or working with an exclusive distributor. The trend is slightly going down in the middle of 2022 but remains sustainable because at present it was secured by more powerful publishers, wealthy readers and collectors and much better supporting industries.

Second, publishers are paying more attention to **digital books** including e-books and audio-books to make use of the content of each title.

Audio-books is a mushrooming trend in the world that Vietnam publishing industry has caught up. While e-book could hardly penetrate the market, audio book saw spectacular growth. Vietnamese companies that developed audio book are very young: Voiz FM was founded in 2019, Fonos 2020 and Mydio 2021. Spotify from Sweden, entering Vietnam in 2018, are also competing in this market. The statistics in the last several years showed astonishing development of audio book: Voiz FM in 2021 increasing by 500% compared with 2020; Fonos reporting hundreds of thousand downloads of their app in 2021.

Readers still like print book because of their long habit. Print book is friendly, beautiful,

and useful, not only for reading but for home decoration. The convenience of e-book does not change significantly the way of reading: using eyes and staying still in a place to read. Moreover, there are so many free e-books available online that people do not like to buy e-book. Audio-book, however, changes greatly the way we read. People can do everything and stay anywhere while listening to a book. The market share of audio book is likely to continue increasing.

To adapt to the changes of the publishing life, publishers have been working closely with audio-book companies. The number of titles that are turned into audio books are on the rise. Regarding important titles, publishers manage

to launch print version and audio version at the same time to make use of promotion campaigns.

Though e-books at present do not seem to be much likeable, they are still worth consideration. Reading habit may change.

Besides, publishers may also utilize content by making book summaries. This is also a rising trend for readers who do not have much time. Among other trends are: publishing additional editions with illustrations and infographic or making into graphic novels; publishing tailored editions for adults and children; adapting to video clips and podcasts that can be distributed in modern technology platforms.

Lastly, the trading in copyrights of Vietnamese works in foreign markets should receive more attention and investment so that Vietnamese works are more accessible to foreign readers in other countries.

A successful book is the book that has many more lives. A publisher with many successful books will be a strong publisher.



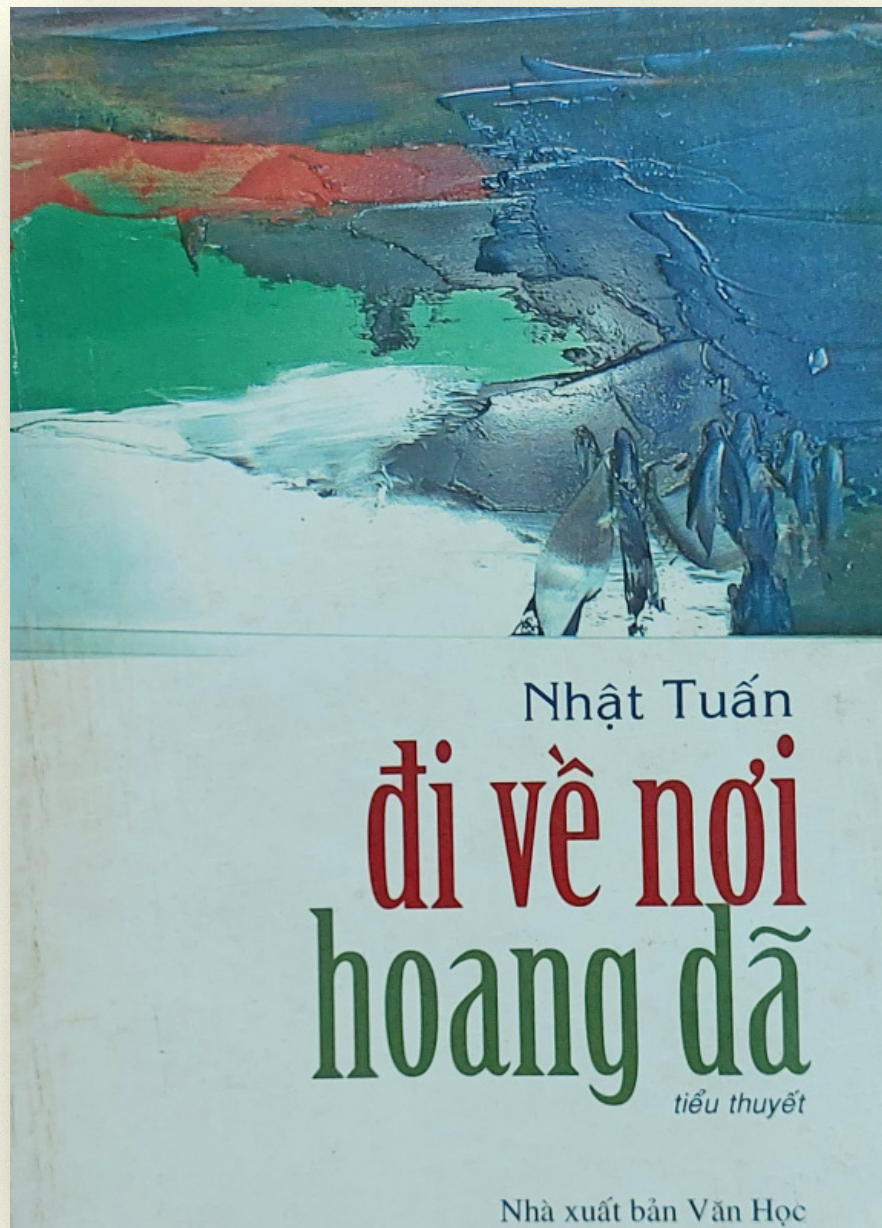
Saving Sorya: Chang and the Sun Bear

Saving H'non: Chang and the Elephant

Published by Kim Dong Publisher in 2021–2022. Kim Dong Publisher managed to strike a deal with Pan Macmillan in publishing globally two volumes of the graphic novel. The copyright fee of this deal was “record high”, according to a Kim Dong representative. The books are about the adventure of Chang, a little girl with burning dream to protect wild animals.

《Saving Sorya: Chang and the Sun Bear》(Chang hoang dã: Gấu)

《Saving H'non: Chang and the Elephant》(Chang hoang dã: Voi)



To the wild

This is one of the best novels of Vietnamese authors in the 20th century. Author Nhat Tuan was born in 1942 and died in 2015. He wrote a lot, both novels and short stories.

Five people were sent to a far-flung and isolated area to find a path to the mount, an assignment given by the high-up based in the delta via radio. It was more and more obvious to everybody that instructions about the path to the mount was absolutely wrong. However, everybody must trust the high-up. They made all efforts to get to the Hua Ca mount that was only in the imagination at all cost. In that tragical and ferocious journey, these people were degraded and regressed to hypocrisy, delusion, brutality and insanity. The end of To the wild showed a mirage of a path to the Hua Ca mount that was only mentioned in a legend. Once the legend was not real, what would people lean on? The shame of all others before the death of their team leader seemed to be a little lifesaver, bringing them back to the humanity.

《To the wild》 (Đi về nơi hoang dã)

(first published in 1988, reprinted by Literature Publisher in 2006)



《Youth grave》

Youth grave

This is the first novel of Huỳnh Trọng Khang who finished it in 2014 when he was 20 years old. The novel won Excellent Book Prize (Giải Sách Hay) in 2017. Khang was born in 1994 in An Giang province. He graduated from Ho Chi Minh Social sciences and humanity university in 2016.

Saigon, 1967 – 1968. When the North and South of Vietnam was at war, son of a General of the Republic of Vietnam, a student majored in philosophy, led a life as a “thug”. He did not join any group or fight for anything. He only sought his joyfulness in the middle of the historical mess. He took refuge in wine, sexual desire or books. Above all was love. He believed in love that was intact during the war. Love helped him to find his existence meaningful, saving him from the sin complex and living in exile in his own country. He loved two girls, one was an innocent girl and the other was a responsible and engaged one. All characters were not persons of action. They only desperately wanted to become a worthy and be loved. However, it was hopeless. All stories and fates intertwined with each other, creating endless memoirs linked with historical events. The novel raised a question: even statues were not innocent in this land lot that was full of wars, how come a person can be free from sin?

PHILIPPINES



Mina V. Esguerra

minavesguerra@gmail.com

Bright Girl Books/RomanceClass Books

Romance, Diversity, Community

My name is Mina V. Esguerra. I am a romance author and publisher in Metro Manila, Philippines. I write romance in English for a young adult and adult audience. Since 2009, I've released 27 books. I founded a romance writing collective called RomanceClass in 2013, and since then we have become a writing and publishing support system for over 100 Filipino authors of romance in English.

As a romance author who advocates for diversity and inclusion in romance literature publishing, I consider some of the top keywords in the industry to be **romance, diversity, and community**.

In the Philippines, romance is not part of the regular curriculum in literature programs, and there are very few academics specializing in the genre. Most literary writers can look to national writing workshops, prestigious contests, and scholarships to develop their careers but these don't consider romance genre authors, unless the author is considering a change in career.

Still, the books are consistent bestsellers and reader favorites, based on curated lists published by Philippine bookstores, and public analytics on reader apps. I'd say it persists as a genre that is popular with its audience, just not with its gatekeepers. I would consider "romance" a keyword of note—having noticed that some parts of the industry almost wish

this was a trend that would go away, and it hasn't. So, the industry produces romance that it doesn't care much about. I wish the Philippine publishing industry cared about the romance it produces.

In 2013 I started #RomanceClass, an online class for romance authors, and since then we've run the class at least ten times and helped over a hundred authors. To be able to explain what RomanceClass does, I need to quickly describe the romance publishing industry in the Philippines today. Traditional corporate romance publishing in the Philippines is now almost entirely driven by online popularity and virality. It's common for publishers to ask authors to make their

stories or author personas popular online first, before even considering publishing them. This is actually exciting and a huge opportunity for authors who are able to connect to their audience online — but when an author does all the work to build their audience, they should have more ownership of their intellectual property and be given better contracts. That is not yet the case.

What would be better for all Filipino romance authors is for the industry to diversify the romance that it publishes, so that the market can grow. And as it grows, the industry should support its authors and artists, as well as its readers.

I describe the situation in the Philippines with 3 keywords:

1. Keyword number one is **Romance**. It is popular today and will still be tomorrow. Romance genre dominates the bestseller lists and app analytics, and romance author events are well-attended. Filipino romance authors of today often now have a following on Wattpad, Twitter, Facebook or their own communities, which means whenever a new book is released they can receive orders of more than 100 copies in the first day. Over the course of its first year, one title can sell from 2,000 to over 50,000 copies.

Filipinos’ consumption of romance has its critics, who say we read and watch too much

romance, such that we don’t have room for anything else. I think there’s room to tell romance stories that reflect our realities, and a popular genre is a great place to start discussing the things that matter to us.

2. Keyword number two is **Diversity**. Yes this means BL/GL and queer romance fiction but it also means Filipino romance creators of various underrepresented communities who are posting their work online. On Wattpad or Webtoon or Twitter or Archive of Our Own and other places. Traditional publishing has a reputation for being too Manila-centric, and these new creators are thriving and attracting a massive audience from various regions in the country. They are innovating in these spaces

before publishers find them.

good for readers, and good for the state of publishing as a whole.

3. Keyword number three is **Community**. Where do we find the innovative new storytellers?

They're on Wattpad, Komiket for indie print comics, Webtoon and Penlab for serialized online comics, RomanceClass for romance in English, Instagram and Facebook for romantic poetry...many communities online. The tomorrow of Philippine publishing is starting in online communities today.

So many good things can come from publishing industry's recognition of the **romance** genre, of committing to **diversity** and inclusion, and of providing reliable and sustainable support to creative **communities**. It's good for creators,



《If the Dress Fits》

Carla de Guzman (in English)

If the Dress Fits

If the Dress Fits by Carla de Guzman is an adult romance book about a main character who is fat, and the love and support she receives from her family, her friends, and ultimately her love interest. This book gets to be very honest about how hurtful society can be, but also shows a way to find love and hope or provide it to someone you love.

Martha Aguas has it all: a job she likes, a puppy she loves, and a wardrobe that makes her feel beautiful. Yes, everyone tries to make her feel bad for being mataba, she can't buy bras in the Philippines, and she's never had a boyfriend. But so what? It's never mattered before.

But when her perfect cousin Regina announces her engagement to Enzo, the blast from the past boy whom she might have loved before, it suddenly feels like a big deal. Aguases from all over the globe are coming in for the engagement of the century, and the last thing Martha wants to hear is a well-meaning barb about how she should watch her weight.

Thank god for Max. Her funny, dependable, best friend Max, who doesn't mind playing the role of fake boyfriend for the family festivities. But the more Martha plays along, the less it feels like pretend, and more she starts to wonder if Max had maybe loved her all along.



《You, Me, U.S.》

Brigitte Bautista (in English)

You, Me, U.S.

You, Me, U.S. by Brigitte Bautista is a funny, gritty romance between two women, who happen to be roommates and friends, doing what they can to get by as they live in near-poverty in the city of Manila. It presents a challenge to romance readers just in the way it's set up so differently but when we call for diversity this is the kind of story we will get and should welcome.

Best friends Jo and Liza are as opposite as night and day. Sex worker Jo swears by the worry-free, one-day-at-a-time dance through life. Salesclerk Liza has big plans for her family's future, and there is nothing bigger than a one-way trip to the U.S. But an almost-kiss, a sex dare, and news of Liza's engagement to her American boyfriend unveil feelings Jo and Liza never thought they had. Deciding between staying together and drifting apart puts Liza's best-laid plans and Jo's laidback life in jeopardy.

When love clashes with lifelong ambitions and family expectations, someone has to give in. Question is: who?



《KILIG》RomanceClass Books and Komiket anthology
edited by Mina V. Esguerra and Paolo Herras (some
stories in English, Filipino)

Kilig

The KILIG anthology features 14 romance comics by 22 Filipino creators. This was a RomanceClass community collab with Filipino comics community Komiket — and when I talked about how communities have been more active as a response to publishing’s lack of support for creators, this has been a next step. We wanted romance comics, from a diverse group of creators, and so we published them. It is a diverse group of stories, from both new and experienced creators. I am the co-editor of this anthology and it’s one of my most exciting projects ever.

RomanceClass and Komiket’s first comics anthology KILIG contains 14 romance stories by 22 Filipino creators. Explore kilig in its many forms: first crushes, second chances, enduring love, from the very personal to the collective, shared thrills.

The Contents of KILIG

- Panaginip ng Pag-Ibig by Marianne
- Cat in the Bag by Sumikiyo and Munppence
- Tuesday Mornings by Hench Dulin

Egg Soup Sunday by Fay Sebastian and Arli Pagaduan

tan by Me by Suzette de Borja and Gianne Rabena

Raise the Curtain by Alexandra Sevilla

Doctor Congeniality by Celestine Trinidad and Liza S. De la Cruz

Unang Lakad by marmastry

OTW by Danice Mae P. Sison and ydbugs

Under the Apocalypse Sun by Cee and Ghost

Against the Current by Yugen and Zee Dino

One True Plant by Carla de Guzman and Liza S. De la Cruz

Ikaw Pa Rin by Chapy Fadullon

Last Minute Love You by Milo Galang and Cris Santos

INDONESIA



Juliana Tan

juliana.tan@gramediapustakautama.id

PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama

During the pandemic in 2020, book publishing in Indonesia has been severely hit by the closing of bookshops as well as by books being considered as non-essential products. Even after the strict Covid measures were lifted earlier this year, the current book sales have not yet returned to the pre-Covid level. Current book sales are generally down by around 35 percent. The figure does not look very encouraging which prompts some people to wonder if book publishers are still relevant nowadays and in the years to come. Such a big question to ponder about, especially for a company which has almost 50 years of book publishing experience under its belt.

However, even in the midst of pessimistic

and cynical outlooks, there are a few markets that are potential for us to explore more. If I were to write down the keywords for the book publishing in Indonesia today, these three words will definitely pop up on top of the list:

AsianLit, Writing Platform, and AU.

What is **AsianLit**? It is actually what our publisher calls translated books from Asian countries or translated books dealing with Asian topics or themes. The trend started in 2011 but it is still going strong, if not stronger, today. It was first triggered by the Korean Wave in Indonesia where we were overcome with euphoria for K-pop and K-drama. As there are more technological advances through the years such as streaming services, we find

ourselves becoming more and more exposed to pop cultures from other Asian countries that include, but not limited to music, films, fashion, as well as books.

AsianLit titles, namely the ones from Japan and Korea, are very popular at the moment. Even though the bestseller list in Indonesia is still dominated by domestic titles, the translated ones that make it to the list are Asian fiction such as “Before the Coffee Gets Cold” by Toshikazu Kawaguchi, books written by Keigo Higashino, “Kim Ji-yeong, Born in 1982” by Cho Nam-joo, and “Almond” by Son Won-pyung. Looking at those titles, Indonesian readers seem to be interested in various genres: romance, fantasy, mystery, slice of life, without any

specific genre that stands out in the AsianLit category. This is because the AsianLit sales in Indonesia are mostly driven by external factors such as famous celebrities’ endorsement or adaptation into popular television series/films. There are, of course, people who read AsianLit books because they find the contents interesting or they like the way the writers tell the story, aside from the fact that those books are read by celebrities. For me, reading a story about Asian values and outlooks is like a breath of fresh air in a market dominated by books from Western countries. It is because AsianLit offers stories from familiar genres yet full of characters with different views on life, and are set on a world and society different from what we have been exposed to all this time.

Digital publishing has often been touted as the future of book publishing industry and the transformation is happening right in front of our eyes. In Indonesia, the **writing platform** fever started with Wattpad. Then in around 2015–2016, noticing the influence of Wattpad, publishers began to acquire stories from the Wattpad writers and publish them into print books. As the years went by, many kinds of writing platforms started to emerge and monetize their contents. There are a lot of new writers who favor writing for the platforms over traditional publishing houses since platforms offer more freedom in writing. They want to write steamy romance? Go ahead! As long as there is no SARA conflict in the writing. For your information, in Indonesian language SARA

refers to Suku, Agama, Ras, Antar–golongan (Ethnicity, Religion, Race, and Intergroup relations). Basically, people can publish what they write originally in the platform without going through arduous editing process as they would in traditional publishing houses.

In 2013 our publishing company launched a crowdsourcing platform named Gramedia Writing Project (GWP). Originating from the belief that readers can also be potential writers, we built a writing platform that also serves as a community to empower both readers and writers. At first, GWP was only intended for us, Gramedia Pustaka Utama. However, to make it bigger and more sustainable, the scope of GWP has now expanded to include the other

five publishing houses under Kompas Gramedia group. Even though there is no monetization in GWP, the platform is still going strong today and is one of the places for us to find new talents. There are already about fifty stories from GWP that are published into print books.

I believe well-managed writing platforms have a promising future in Indonesia, because the platforms present stories in easier-to-digest short chapters, which pull in people who do not necessarily like to read books. Moreover, posting works on writing platforms is much easier for new writers to get their stories out there, to amass fans and followers, and to make money.

The next keyword has been buzzing around the book publishing industry in Indonesia for the past couple of years. **AU, a.k.a Alternate Universe**. This is something that all fan fiction readers are very familiar with. AU is a setting for a work of fan fiction that departs from the original story of the fictional universe that the fan work is based on. AU stories can also feature characters inspired by real-life celebrities who live in a different environment, have a different history, and are tangled up in love stories or other challenges fantasized by the writers. Usually AU stories are found on personal blogs, fan blogs, tumblr, or websites dedicated to fan fiction/fan works. However, due to the rising popularity of Wattpad and other writing platforms in Indonesia, AU stories

have also found a new home there.

We start hearing AU being mentioned by people who are not fan fiction readers. This new popularity of AU is driven by the fact that it has taken a new life on Twitter with the emergence of Fake Tweet and Fake Chat apps, where the writers will make as though the characters chat with each other. The most popular AU stories in Indonesia are romance with characters inspired by real-life celebrities. And some publishers have started to monetize this craze by publishing the AU stories in print books (of course, without using the celebrities' names).

Now, thinking back to the aforementioned

question whether book publishers are still relevant in the coming years, my answer would be yes. It is a fact that the heart of a book publishing company is content, regardless of the form. Whether it is print book, e-book, or webnovels, as long as we find the types of content that we can capitalize on, such as AsianLit or AU, we would definitely still be relevant.



《Perempuan Yang Menangis Kepada Bulan Hitam》
(She Who Weeps to the Black Moon) By Dian
Purnomo

Perempuan Yang Menangis Kepada Bulan Hitam (She Who Weeps to the Black Moon)

Magi Diela is kidnapped and tamed like a wild animal. Gone are her dreams of building Sumba. Now she has to fight against her parents, the whole village, and the centuries-old tradition that are taking away her independence as a woman. As Magi is bound by the patriarchal culture, she is left to choose her own hell: leaving her parents and homeland, surrendering herself to the old pervert, or cheating her own death. **She Who Weeps to the Black Moon** is a novel based on the experiences of women who have fallen victim to the bride-kidnapping tradition in Sumba, and is meant to amplify the voices of the women whose cries are still not being heard, even by God.

This novel tells the story of a young woman from Sumba, an island in the eastern part of Indonesia, and her struggle to fight a centuries-old tradition of “bride kidnapping”, a practice in which a woman is taken away by her future husband before a wedding. It is said to be a courtship ritual with consent from the woman and the parents. However, the heroine in this novel is taken away without consent by a much older man from the neighboring village who has been obsessed with her. And since she has been “kidnapped”,

she is forced, by tradition, into marrying her kidnapper. Set in the exotic location of Sumba with an authentic description of its customs and community, this book highlights the feminist themes of fighting for women's rights and challenging patriarchy system.

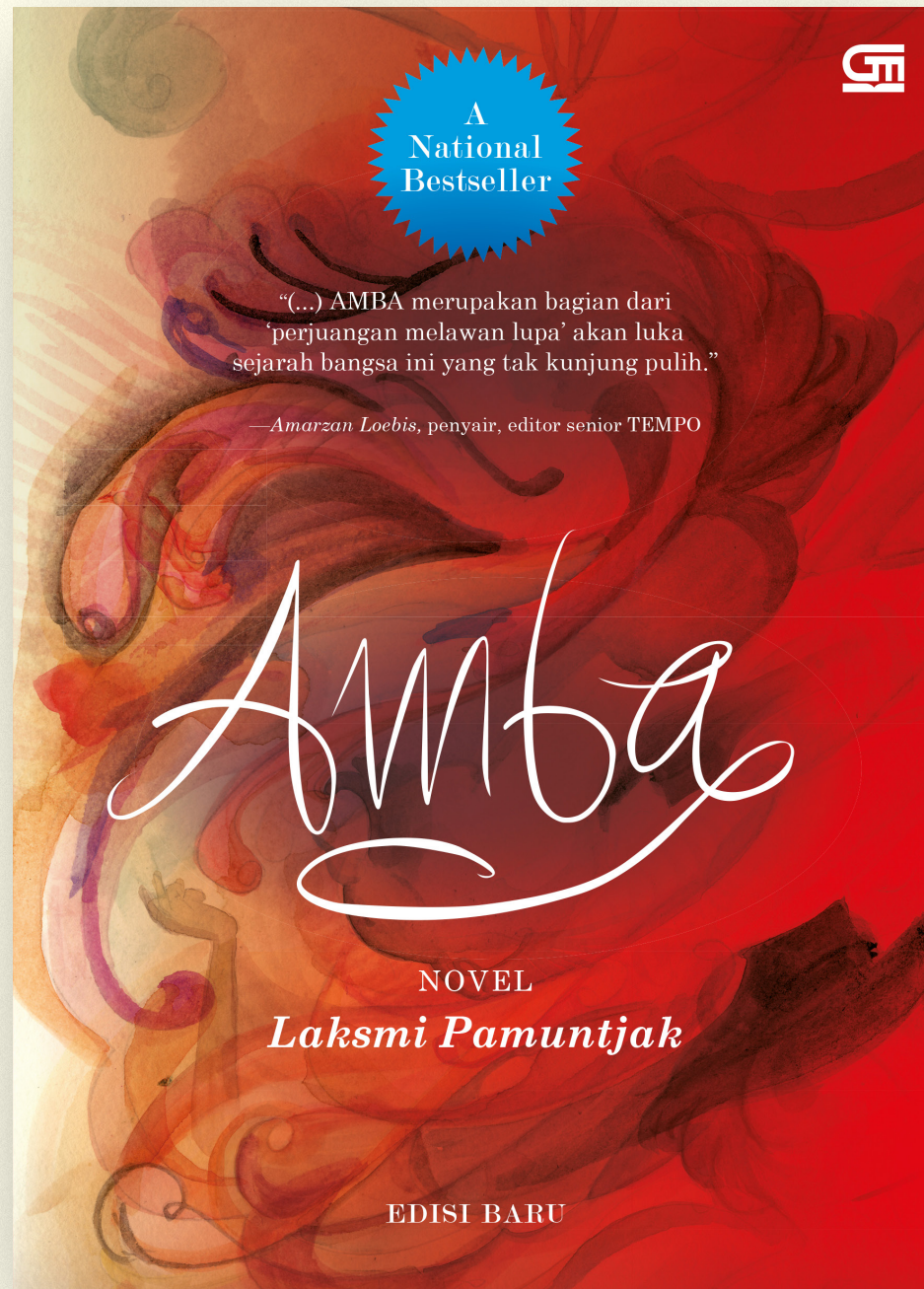
About the Author

Dian Purnomo, whose birth name is Dian Yuliasri, was born in 1976 in Salatiga, Central Java. She started writing seriously when she was in high school, and has experience working in radio stations. She has written 9 novels including an anthology.

Dian Purnomo has a particular interest in social issues, especially women's issues and child protection. *She Who Weeps to the Black Moon* comes out after a six-year hiatus from the author. She wrote this novel after receiving the 2019 Indonesian Writers Residency grant in Sumba.

Online bookstore link:

<https://www.gramedia.com/products/perempuan-yang-menangis-kepada-bulan-hitam>



《Amba: Sebuah Novel》(The Question of Red)
By Laksmi Pamuntjak

Amba: Sebuah Novel (The Question of Red)

Synopsis

In this sweeping saga of love, loss, revolution, and the resilience of the human spirit, Amba must find the courage to forge her own path.

Amba was named after a tragic figure in Indonesian mythology, and she spends her lifetime trying to invent a story she can call her own. When she meets two suitors who fit perfectly into her namesake's myth, Amba cannot help but feel that fate is teasing her. Salwa, respectful to a fault, pledges to honor and protect Amba, no matter what. Bhisma, a sophisticated, European-trained doctor, offers her sensual pleasures and a world of ideas. But military coups and religious disputes make 1960s Indonesia a place of uncertainty, and the chaos strengthens Amba's pursuit of freedom. The more Amba does to claim her own story, the better she understands her inextricable bonds to history, myth, and love.

Published in Indonesian language as *Amba: Sebuah Novel*, *The Question of Red* has enjoyed three reprintings within four months and received LiBeraturpreis in 2016. It tells the story of two lovers, Amba and Bhisma, driven apart by one of the bloodiest Communist purges in the 20th century—the massacres that took place in Indonesia between 1965 and

1968 in which some 1 million people were killed. From rural Java and Yogyakarta to the prison camps of Buru Island, where some 12,000 alleged Communists were incarcerated without trial during the Suharto administration, the lives of the central characters interpret the Mahabharata—that timeless allegory of war within a family—with a modern twist.

Review

“In the book *The Question of Red* Pamuntjak takes the reader on a moving journey of a young love set against the turmoil of 1965. Based on thorough research but also interwoven with the great myths of our time, Pamuntjak manages to bring back to life these turbulent years with amazing details. Despite the film *The Act of Killing*, little is known about the terrible massacres that took place in 1965. The enormous success of the book in Indonesia shows at what crucial time the book was published. Now an international reception of the book is crucial. *The Question of Red* is one of the best Indonesian books I have read. I was drawn into the story immediately and it would not let go off me for many weeks.” – Katrin Sohns, Program Director, Goethe Institut Jakarta.

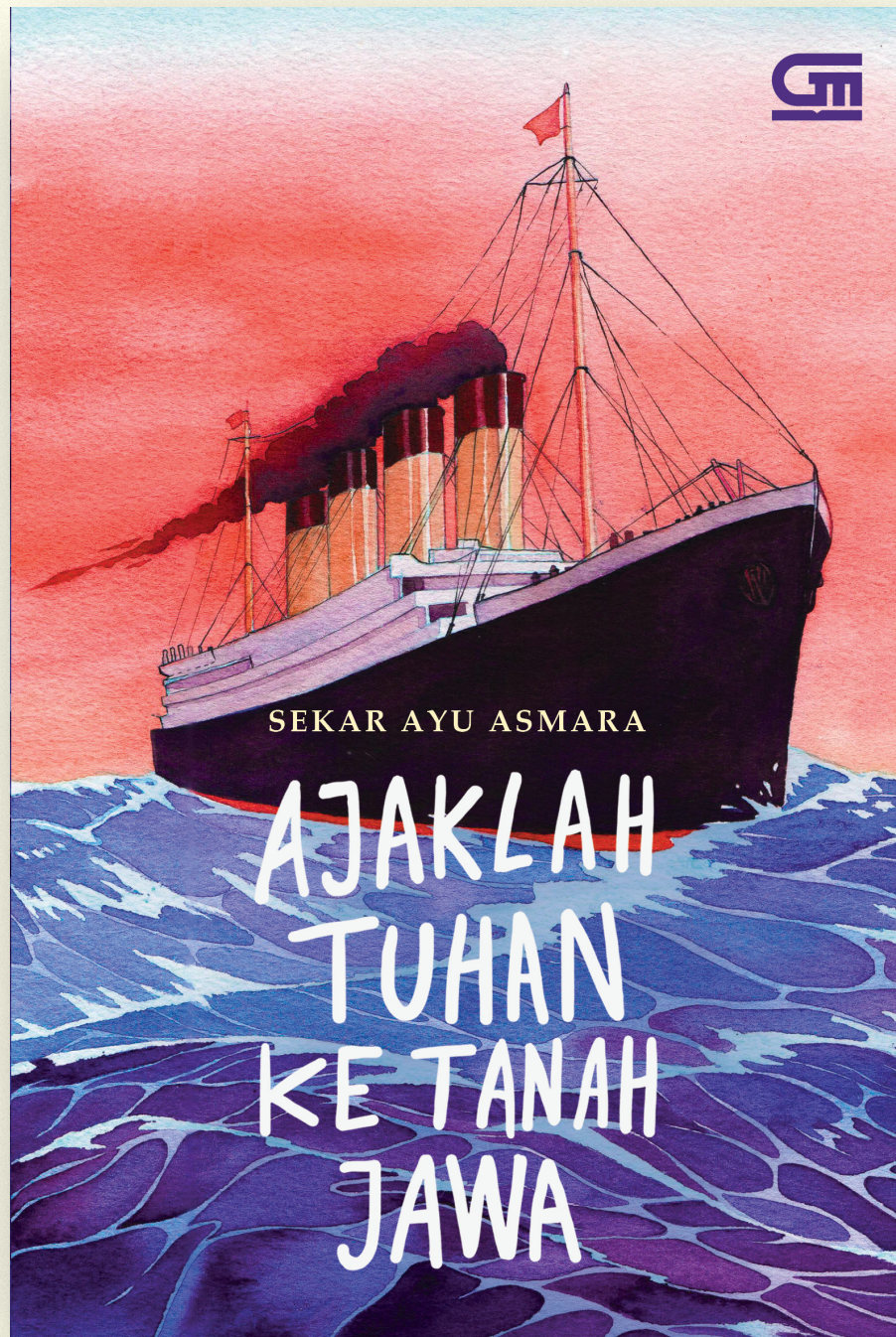
About the Author

Laksmi Pamuntjak has published two collections of poetry, *Ellipsis* (2005), recommended by Suhayl Saadi in the Herald UK Books of the Year pages, and *The Anagram* (2007), as well as *Perang, Langit dan Dua Perempuan* (2006), a treatise on violence and the Iliad, the short story collection *The Diary of R.S.: Musings on Art* (2006), and four editions of the award-winning Jakarta Good Food Guide. Her poems, short stories and essays have also been published in several international journals, including the preface to *Not a Muse: International Anthology of Women's Poetry* (2008). In 2012 she was selected as the Indonesian representative at the Poetry Parnassus/ Cultural Olympiad in London, held in conjunction with the London Olympics.

Laksmi Pamuntjak is an Indonesian poet, essayist, and award-winning novelist and food writer. Pamuntjak has written several novels as well as articles for local and international publications, including opinion articles for the Guardian.

Online bookstore link:

<https://www.gramedia.com/products/amba>



《Ajaklah Tuhan Ke Tanah Jawa》 (Bringing the Lord to the Land of Java) By Sekar Ayu Asmara / 2020

Ajaklah Tuhan Ke Tanah Jawa (Bringing the Lord to the Land of Java)

Synopsis

This is a story about a young woman who leaves Amsterdam for Java, Indonesia after losing her loved ones in the deadly Nazi invasion.

Just when she starts to find peace amidst the turmoil in her surroundings, Japanese begins to invade the Dutch East Indies. Can she hold on to her faith in God when the world around her is constantly full of tragedy and misery?

In 1940, Rebekah Blumenfeld is touted as the future of the Netherlands music. However, the arrival of Nazi Germany shatters her idyllic life. She married her childhood friend, Isaac, overnight only to be widowed the next day. Her family splits up to find safety. And Rebekah's father told her to sail to the Dutch East Indies, or to be exact, Java, to find refuge on their relatives' place. Then away she goes with her disabled brother and her violin.

Misfortune after misfortune befalls her during the voyage on board of SS Victoria. From

miscarriage, attempted suicide, the death of her brother, to the loss of her favorite violin. But Rebekah keeps holding on to her late husband's last words, "Bring God with you, wherever you go."

After arriving in Java, Rebekah tries to start a new chapter in her life. She works as a music teacher for kids and falls in love with a handsome, noble man named Wiro. Unfortunately, she still has not yet found peace. However, Rebekah is struggling with the difference in their religions and cannot stop looking for answers.

Outside the war continues to rage. The Japanese Empire is preparing to fight against the Dutch and begins the propaganda that they are the leader of Asia, the protector of Asia, and the light of Asia. Dutch people are being captured and placed in harsh Japanese concentration camps. Rebekah is once again trapped in despair. She believes that she has brought God to Java with her, but will God save her from the catastrophe of war that takes away everything she loves?

About the Author

Sekar Ayu Asmara was born in Jakarta. She spent her childhood moving from one country to another due to her father's diplomatic career. She has lived in Afghanistan, Turkey,

and the Netherlands. Besides writing novels, she is also a film director, painter, music producer, and screenwriter.

Her first film, *Biola Tak Berdawai* (Stringless Violin), was awarded The Naguib Mahfouz Prize at the 2003 Cairo International Film Festival. This prestigious award was given to the director. Her second film, *Belahan Jiwa* (Soulmate), also won The Best International Feature Film award at the 2007 New York International Independent Video and Film Festival.

Sekar has published several novels including *Pintu Terlarang* (2004), *Kembar Keempat* (2005), *Doa Ibu* (2009), *Gong Nyai Gandrung* (2020), *Kitab Kencan* (2021), *Blue Morpho* (2020), *Ajaklah Tuhan Ke Tanah Jawa* (2020), *Jakarta Rock 'N' Roll* (2021), *Rahasia Gemini* (2022), dan *Kitab Mantan* (2022).

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Online bookstore link:

<https://www.gramedia.com/products/ajaklah-tuhan-ke-tanah-jawa>

INDONESIA



Yuli Pritania

yulipritania.noura@gmail.com

Noura Publishing

Indonesia was in 60th place, out of 61 countries, for World's Most Literate Nations Ranked in 2016. But then in that exact year, this Wattpad phenomenon appeared and hit the bookstores like storm. Started with Dear Nathan, which soon became the mega bestseller book, adapted into movies and got 2 more book sequels. Hundreds of titles from Wattpad continued to dominate the shelves in bookstore until now. Another famous title is Mariposa, got 133 M views in Wattpad, sold 18.000 copies in pre-order and later also adapted into movie and got 2 more books sequels like Dear Nathan.

Since the pandemic, nonfiction books were really good in selling, especially if it discussed

about mental health or recommended by K-Pop Idols. The one which really stole the spotlight is I Want to Die but I Want to Eat Tteokpokki by Baek Se-Hee, recommended by RM BTS. There are more nonfiction books from Korea you will see in bookstores instead of the ones translated from English or even written by Indonesian writers. There was also a trend with the prose or poetry books, in mini size, hard cover and full-color illustration, although it just stayed for a short time because of the expensive price.

As a fiction editor, I'm surely more familiar with the novels. And if you ask me about the keywords for fiction trend in Indonesia, I will say these 3: **K-Pop, AU, and Wattpad.**

We'll start with **Wattpad**. This is the right place for debut author or the writers who can't get their manuscripts being published by the publishers. E-books are not doing really well in Indonesia, but the writing platform like Wattpad is succeed in grabbing teenagers' attention. Why? I think it's because Wattpad is the media for communicating, discussing and finding new friends with the same taste. People in Indonesia love to leave comments in everything and in Wattpad, you can share your thoughts in every paragraph. The readers can communicate directly with the authors and that's what they love the most: the closeness, the intimacy. They like to have some kind of role models. And Wattpad users are mostly teenagers. They don't really care about the writing style, as long

as the story is relatable to them, they devour it. They love light story about bad boy and high school, or CEO male lead and office romance. For some reasons, personally I don't really like this trend. There are some good stories, but the ones which get attention is some kind of vulgar stories that are accessible for the young readers. It's really unfortunate that many new publishers even give the spotlight to this kind of stories. They just want the good money and not really think about the quality. They don't even edit the manuscripts to make the novels proper to be sold, just release it as it is.

But on the other side, Wattpad makes young people, especially the teenagers, started to read again. They can access this platform

from their phone easily, read for free, and even communicate with the authors and other readers. This is why they are willingly buying the same stories which then publish as a book, with quite high price. Usually, the novel version has some special chapters and the merchandises for the pre-order package.

There are many Wattpad novels adapted into series or movies in OTT platform. They choose teenage stories because people from that age-group is their biggest users. The young people in Indonesia tend to avoid television programs because they are rarely good and have hundreds of boring episodes, that's why the OTT platforms are really welcomed in this country.

Wattpad trend already dominates for years and I hope, if this trend still continued, the publishers become more selective of their choice, instead of only looking for profit based on million views in Wattpad.

Trend for **AU (Alternate Universe)**, part of fanfiction world, appeared massively in the last 2 years in form of Twitter thread. This is for the young readers, especially K-Popers, who don't really like to read the stories with long narration, many chapters and hundred of pages. AU usually has K-Pop idols as main character and sets in Indonesia, in range of high school to college students. The concept is fake chats (mostly WhatsApp) and social media posts, accompanied by some photos from the K-Pop

idols in their “boyfriend or girlfriend style” to make it looked real. The stories are light, short (just 2–4 photos upload in one tweet), and relatable. Senior–junior, childhood friends, brother/sister’s friend, enemy or friend to lovers, matchmaking; those are the love tropes they like. Once these stories get published as books, the authors will change the K–Pop idols into local names to avoid the copyright.

Noura Publishing, or me as the editor, is more interested in other perspective of the K–Wave. Webtoon and KakaoPage have massive readers in our country, so we choose to publish the novel version of some webtoons, especially the titles which then adapted into K–dramas. We’ve already published The King: Eternal Monarch

and Office Blind Date/Business Proposal. We also published a novel by actress Ku Hye–Sun, titled Heart–Shaped Tears and two novels of Korean thriller: The Plotters and Lies Hidden in My Backyard.

Noura Publishing is more popular with translated fantasy novels. Some of our famous writers are Rick Riordan, Victoria Aveyard, Stephanie Garber, and Roald Dahl. Percy Jackson and the Olympians series are our most best–selling book. And now Indonesian readers also interested in classics, so we also published books from Edgar Allan Poe, Jane Austen, and Mark Twain.

I always hope, as the one who choose what

to publish in the first hand, Noura Publishing and other publishers can deliver not only good novels for readers, but also the stories which can deliver good messages to them, some that they can remember or even change their life.



《Orang-Orang Bloomington》

Orang-Orang Bloomington

Written by Budi Darma, one of Indonesia's most influential writers, Orang-Orang Bloomington first published in 1980 and then we republished it in 2016. It consists of 7 short stories and sets in Bloomington.

The Contents of Orang-Orang Bloomington

The Old Man With No Name : A story about a man who rented a room in Mrs. MacMillan's home. In his neighbour's home, Mrs. Casper, lived an old man who also rented a room and have a weird hobby: playing with his pistol.

Joshua Karabish : Tells about the friendship between the main character with a guy named Joshua Karabish because of some poems. One day, the male character received a letter from Joshua's mother that tells him about the death of Joshua and the wish for him to return Joshua's belongings.

M Family : Tells about a man who lived in an apartment full of families. This man became lonely and one day, he felt really angry because he is suspicious that the damage in his

car is caused by the kid of his neighbour. He really wanted them to go from his apartment building. One day, M Family got into an accident when they were in vacation. But, instead of feeling happy, our main character wanted to help them. Unfortunately, his kindness was not received well.

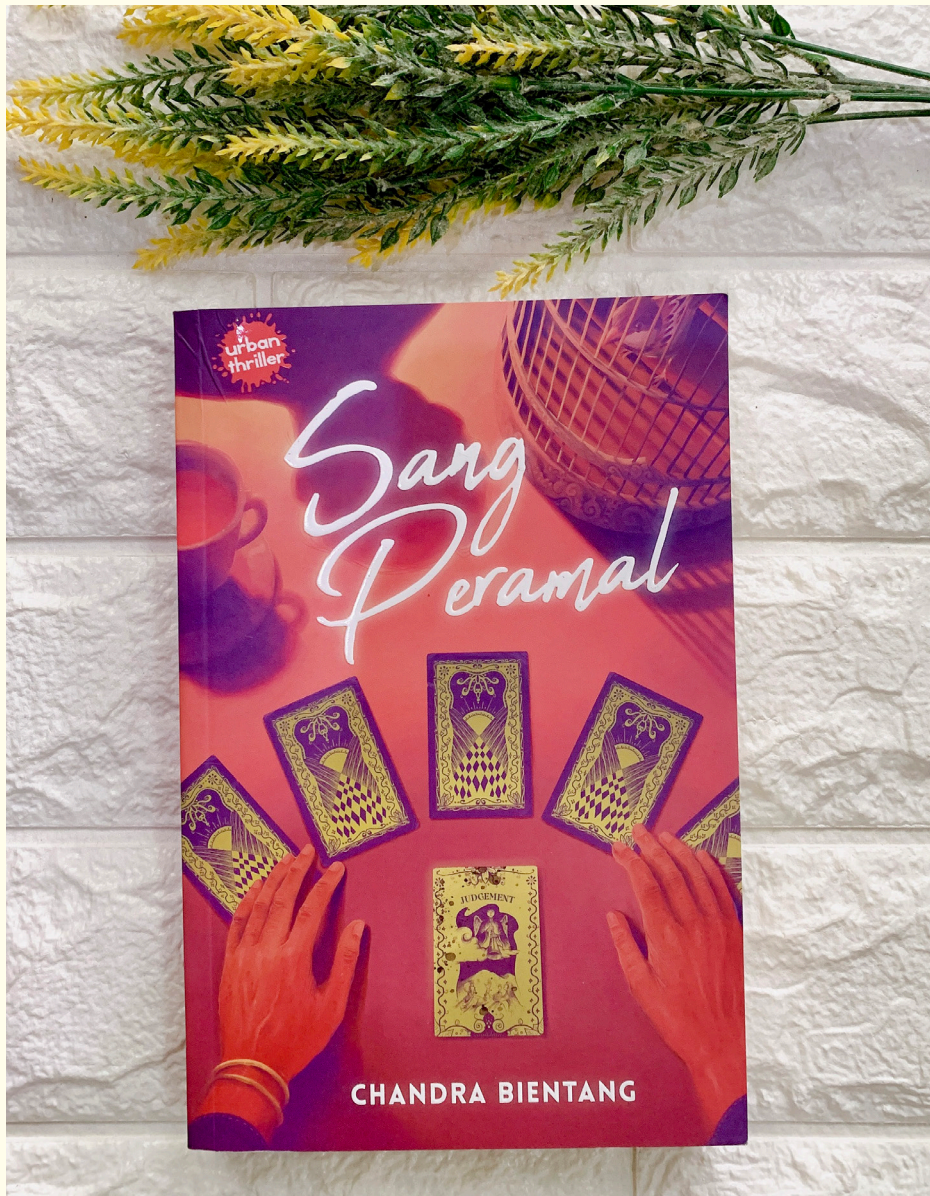
Orez : Tells about a man who has a kid named Orez. But Orez was not a good son and he really lost his temper when he faced him. One day, he thought maybe it will be better if he just killed him and end his agony.

Yorrick : A man who fell in love and wanted to live near his crush. He failed, because the woman, Catherine, already had a boyfriend named Yorrick. The male character then fell in love with another woman, Caroline, but she also already had boyfriend, Kenneth. But, when the owner of his rented home arranged a party, he then realized the secret about those two couples.

Ny. Elberhart : The main character has a relationship with Mrs. Elberhart and when she passed away, he inherited all of her fortune. The main character then dedicated his poem under her name, but no one interested about it. He was failed to repay her kindness.

Charles Lebourne : James Russel felt disturbed by the lights of Tuleep Tree. It came from Charles Lebourne's room, his father. James was disappointed because his father didn't value him as a son or even human. Feeling the rage, he then did something to his father's car and he got an accident. For the sake of humanism, James offered his help and let his father lived with him. He didn't know that Charles enslaved him.

This collection of short stories won S.E.A. Write Award from Thailand government in 1984. Budi Darma is a professor and a lecturer in English Department until his retirement in 2007, at the age of 70. Budi Darma just passed away in August 2021 before he can see his book get published by Penguin Classics under the title People from Bloomington in April 2022.



《Sang Peramal》

Sang Peramal

Sang Peramal, means The Fortune Teller, is written by Indonesian author Chandra Bientang. This is the blurb:

Her name was Imar Mulyani. Everyone called her “The Fortune Teller”. She often appeared in TV every end of the year, reading her Tarot cards and told people about their fates. She can predict catastrophe, celebrities’ or politician’s scandals, or just say: everything bad and sensational.

Her clients, the famous or ordinary ones, have one similarity: dark secrets. When Imar disappeared one night, in the middle of a dinner at her home while she was inviting her neighbours, who is to blame if not one of them?

Chandra Bientang is one of emerging writers in Ubud Writers and Readers Festival 2019.

Sang Peramal has unique theme and local ambience through its characters and settings.

Touching the issue about the obsession towards fortune-telling, which is something normal in Indonesia. People are obsessed with the past, the present, and the future. Those are the basic elements of this novel.

Some chapters show how the characters can't run away from their past and have to struggle in the present, feeling anxious about the future. Their stories are relatable in real life; it felt close.

The topics about prejudice also appeared in this book, especially about Imar's profession. It also tells about women, their differences and their struggles.

Mostly, a thriller story started with a murder, but here, Bientang focused on a missing person. It shows a riddle to be analysed and solved. Readers will try to guess what was really happening and maybe their answer was far from the truth. The layers of secrets soon be discovered and maybe they will surprise you.

This is a psychological thriller novel with so many plot twists that will grab your attention.



《AESOP》

AESOP

AESOP is Noura Publishing’s newest product that is still in pre-order. This is for 3-year-old children and up. Consists of 5 bilingual picture books with pop-up (all written in rhymes), 1 short stories collection, story cards (you can arrange your own style of stories), and also memory and board game.

- 1. Picture Book: Bocah Gembala dan Serigala
- 2. Picture Book: Petani, Anaknya, dan Keledai
- 3. Picture Book: Tikus Desa dan Tikus Kota
- 4. Picture Book: Semut dan Belalang
- 5. Picture Book: Singa dan Tikus
- 6. Short Stories Collection: Aesop’s Fables
- 7. Story Cards: Arrange your own story!
- 8. Memory Game: Memorize & Match Them!
- 9. Board Game: Who Is the First?
- 10. Guideline Book
- 11. Boks Inner
- 12. Boks Outer

This project inspired by Aesop, a Greek fabulist and storyteller credited with a number of fables now collectively known as Aesop’s Fables. It’s a combination of reading, learning, and playing. What you can get from this product:

- (1) Introducing universal moral values which is timeless.
- (2) Forming the characters building
- (3) Stimulating the cognitive and imaginative skills.
- (4) Full of fun stories that can entertain the children.
- (5) The combination of reading, learning, and playing.
- (6) Good for read aloud.
- (7) Beautiful illustrations and designs.

SRI LANKA



Heshan J. Peiris

info@kbooks.lk

KBOOKS Pvt Ltd

Keywords for innovation in publishing

Technology and innovation are evolving at a rapid pace around the world, and there are numerous areas where the publishing industry can benefit from these emerging trends and become a more cutting-edge industry while making reading more affordable and there are key areas that can be listed as follows as the keywords for innovation in publishing.

1. Digital Publishing and Reading

1. 1. eBooks

In today’s world, there are 6.567 billion smartphones, which means that more than 83% of the world’s population owns a smartphone. (Statista) As of July 2022, there

are 5.03 billion Internet users worldwide. (Statista) Reaching readers via the Internet and allowing them to read from their smartphones has immense market potential, in addition it will enable the Software as a Service (SaaS) model for delivering entertainment and knowledge via digital channels. According to global reading surveys, one out of every four sales was purchased as an eBook, and this figure is increasing exponentially year over year. Much research is being conducted in order to enable browser-based cross-platform reading with improved DRM that will work with many of the leading web browsers. And as technology advances, eBooks will become an industry with an exponential growth in the years ahead.

1.2. Audiobooks

On the other hand, there is a global trend toward audio streaming services, and podcasts and audiobooks are becoming increasingly popular. Audiobooks are becoming increasingly popular in China, with over 30% market share, and this trend will likely continue in other Asian countries in the coming years. Many readers are unable to find the time and peace to read a paperback book due to their hectic lifestyles. However, audiobooks allow them to listen to their favourite books while at work, traveling, driving, exercising, or even dining. And the significant proportion of Millennials and Generation Z are eager for personal development and wealth creation. They are, however, shorting the amount of time they

spend reading, making them an ideal audience for audiobooks. Furthermore, audiobooks are a better tool for readers in terms of accessibility for people with visual impairments, as discussed further in the following paragraph.

2. Reading for the Visually Impaired

Local language book readers with visual impairments in Asia are currently struggling to meet their reading expectations due to the limited availability of impairment-supportive reading material with traditional printed publishing and are seeking more technology-driven solutions to overcome these challenges. For them to be able to read, audiobooks would be a lifesaver. Enabling accessibility-friendly features in the app or reading framework also

makes it much easier for readers with visual impairments to find and listen to their favourite audiobooks. It will make it easier for them to gain access to knowledge and live a normal life, just like many others who have access to knowledge.

3. Augmented Reality for Reading/Learning

Augmented Reality allows readers to have more interactive and gamified experiences, and it can be used in children's books and educational needs to provide a better learning experience. With the assistance of 3D models and animations, it will provide students with a better way to comprehend more complex subject matters in the educational domain. Learners can interact with educational

content in a fun way by using audio and video overlays. In addition, interactive and gamified experiences would be an excellent motivator for children to read more. They wouldn't just be reading the books; they'd be interacting with the characters in the story, which would foster a love of reading in children. Who doesn't enjoy interacting with the characters in a book while reading it?

4. AI based Behavioural Recommendations for Reading

It's fascinating to think about how ML (Machine Learning) and AI (Artificial Intelligence) will transform the publishing industry in the future. Using ML and AI, we will soon be able to niche target readers based on their

reading preferences, as well as predict reader responses and attention for both book covers and actual content. Ultimately, to emotionally attach readers to reading, serve them what they really want to read at the right time, and they will want to read that specific content. On the other hand, this would be extremely beneficial for publishers to understand reader engagement for books in digital formats before they are published in paperback. Alternatively, obtain real-time test readers for the content and to understand the book covers with the strongest reader engagement. Readers would see titles based on their reading preferences with behavioural recommendations, which could encourage them to continue reading the suggested books through AI.

5. Utilization of Blockchain Technology for Reading

5.1. Blockchain Technology/NFTs

There is an emerging trend for the use of Blockchain Technology throughout all industries, but there are currently only a few use cases in the publishing industry. In the digital publishing domain, eBooks and audiobooks can be considered NFTs (Non-Fungible Tokens) this improves the transparency, traceability, and accountability of digital sales of books. Enabling ERC-721-based dynamic Smart Contracts for eBooks and Audiobooks will make it easier for authors to understand their books’ sales volumes, who own each unique copy of the book, and how many books were actually purchased using the smart contract we

generate for each book. Writers and publishers would be able to deploy millions of books and their unique instances into the Web3 space at a low cost using Polygon Blockchain, which offers low gas fees and lazy minting. This will also allow writers and publishers to have better intellectual property ownership and content rights.

5.2. IPFS(InterPlanetary File System)

This includes exploring the utilization and potential of IPFS (InterPlanetary File System) for improved DRM (Digital Rights Management) protected digital reading materials. This is an experimental feature that we are developing internally to build a more secure, efficient, and distributed P2P content delivery system based

on IPFS that allows eBooks and Audiobooks to be encrypted and stored in a decentralized manner that uses content-addressed storage. Each piece of data in this protocol is given a unique content identifier (CID). Based on this unique CID, all content-addressed data in IPFS can be found and retrieved. There is no single point of failure on a single server with decentralization. Nobody can censor or delete the data. More importantly, it would be cost-effective because it would not necessitate a large number of high-performance servers or load balancers from a centralized provider in order to deliver the content with 100% uptime.

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《Dream Catcher》

Dream Catcher

The book titled Dream Catchers is written by Kanchana Priyakantha, and it is a collection of nine different short stories. It was recognized as the best collection of short stories by the Godage National Awards in 2019, and it was chosen as one of the finalists for the State Literary Awards that same year. The book dream catchers has been met with favorable reviews and positive reception from readers. The book is also available in Tamil and Nepali translations, in addition to Sinhala.

Two of the short stories, “The Independent Doll” and “The Fan,” have been turned into short films by Sri Lankan filmmakers. One of the short films is available online.

Dream Catchers is an excellently crafted and intricately woven collection of short stories that has the ability to keep the reader’s attention throughout. The topics that were chosen are diverse and are detailed in the presentation. Some of the tales in the book dream catchers, which bears the same name as the book itself, have a smidgen of enigma to them. This may be accomplished by means of oblique revelations of the crude ways in which the human world operates, or it may take the form of a mirror reflecting the deceitful

relationships that exist between the rulers and the rules.

In addition, the stories explore the depths of the human psyche and shed light on the reader regarding the reality of human nature.

The titles of the short stories are as follows: “The Independent Doll,” “The Cousin,” “Bats,” “The Wallet,” “Worthless Woman,” “Honda Ekee (The Good One),” “The Rails,” “The Fan,” and “Deliverance.”

The author makes extensive use of literary devices like symbols, metaphors, similes, hyperbole, images, humanization, personification, etc., to deepen the impact of the stories and convey the author’s intended message. The writing is simple and does not waste time with unnecessary description. In its apparent lack of complexity, the book is actually quite profound. Her narrative techniques are similarly impressive and shed light on the stories’ nuances.

The overarching message of the stories is that nobody is as perfect as they appear to be in public. Ash-colored people, rather than people of either black or white, predominate in this society. There is no such thing as a perfect society, but many individuals who

are supposed to represent that society cannot resist the urge to pass judgments on the characters. However, the author places a strong emphasis on the fact that empathy, and not sympathy, is the trait that is most important.

“Convinced subconsciously that compared to our wives she wasn’t a beauty queen, we discussed this among ourselves many times. Though in reality she was no gorgeous beauty like some actress, we all knew deep in our hearts that she was irresistible. Nobody denied her irresistibility so we felt as if we had achieved victory on a certain matter.”

– Worthless Woman

Although the flaws of society are pointed out with irony and sarcasm in Dream Catchers, the characters are not judged and the reader is instead encouraged to see aspects of themselves in the narratives.



《The New Mayor》Aluth Nagaradhipathi

The New Mayor

“The New Mayor” is a collection of short stories created to better the society of its protagonists. In his book, Reverend Batuangala Rahula explains his surroundings. He depicts the tragedy of our lives with the same incisiveness as his innovative explanations of those phenomena. Ironically and thoughtfully, he penetrates the core of what we know by using new narrative tactics, changing the formal framework, and concealing multiple words within one. These short stories have additional depth and perspective due to his ability to analyse the human mind and his philosophy of life.

The New Mayor is a collection of short stories about society and human behavior that consists of 11 short stories. Most of these come from understanding how different aspects of society work. It has a “social catastrophe mentality,” which is something that many creators didn’t think about and which grew after the war. In a number of his short stories, he depicts what happens to those who leave their country in search of solutions to its political and economic problems.

The writer releases the linguistic experiments associated with the Jataka story format to

the readers through short stories such as Akala Jataka, based on the philosophy of life. In its experimental style, it pulls the reader into history and gives him confidence in the range of his own language practice.

The book's eponymous short story, "The New Mayor," is a mirror of a short story writer's distinctive mood and practise of juggling antecedents. He describes the reality of many things we know and have experienced but cannot tell you about. He destroys our hopes and sensations between the letters, and the truth hits us.

He brings a canvas from China to cover the massive waste piles. On the canvas, an evocative image is sketched. Their henchmen, like politicians, are not immune to his letters. Crows, swords, rooms, scents, and so forth are all symbols. Paintings cover up odours and filth. This intense political consciousness calls into question the readership's political consciousness. He explains what we've lost due to enslavement and the world we're in without knowing it. That is evident in his short stories.

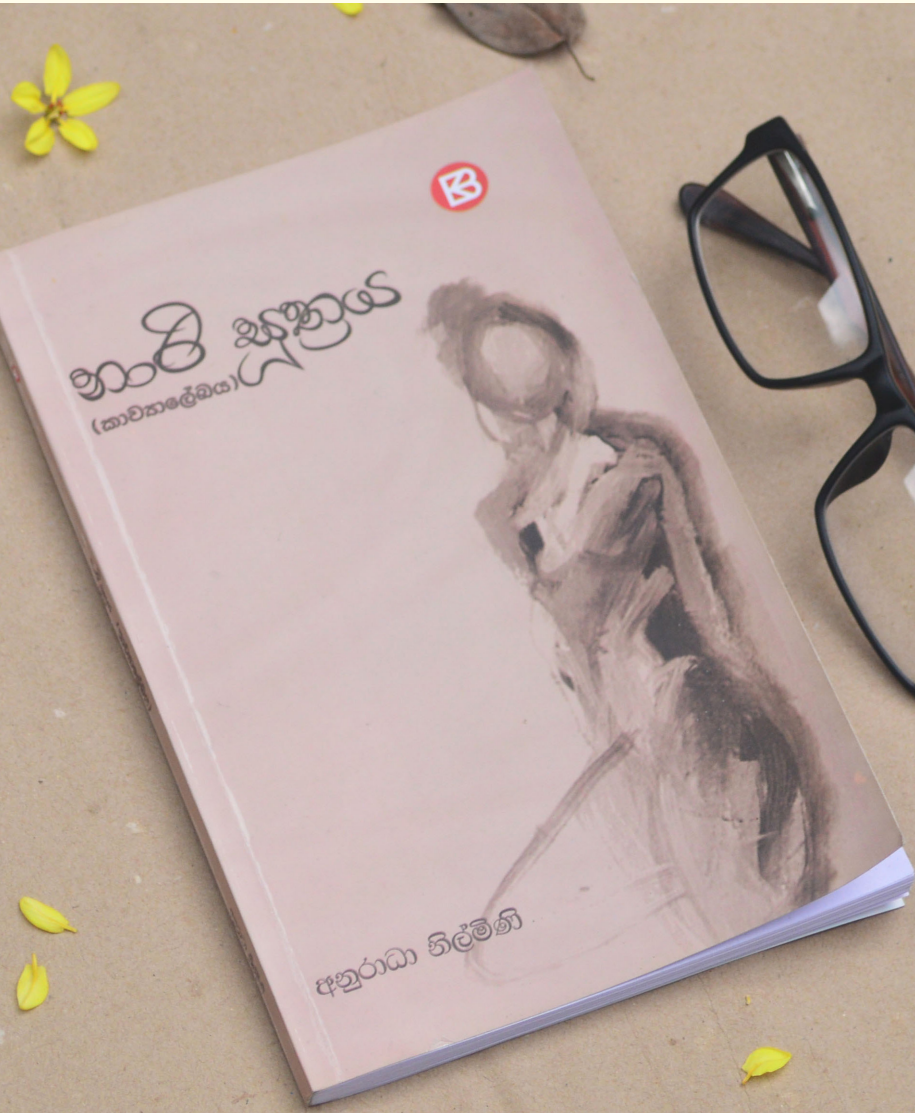
It will take some time for the folks in the village who do everything to change. The distinction between pragmatism and theoretical methods in the political flow, or, in a

nutshell, the dimorphism and polymorphism of human life, are all covered here.

A distinct characteristic of all the short stories of Batuangala Rahula is the use of symbols.

He recreates the phenomenon of the journey of life, which leads to complexity, with a lot of knowledge about the religion of life. The birthmark in the short story “Refugees” is one example. It can be taken as a single word used to describe a large set of qualities.

The throat rod is also a symbol. The disgust that builds up in the character is well felt. The dichotomous, polymorphic commentary seen in a short story like Aria 51 is surprising. He is very conscious of his design for our lives, which are not ours.



《Nāri Sūtraya》

Nāri Sūtraya

Nari Suthraya (Feminine Suthra) by Anuradha Nilmini was nominated for the Godage Literary Award, the Vidyodaya Literary Award, the Rajatha Pusthaka Award and won the State Literary Award in 2022.

“Nari Sutra” (poetry) is a novel attempt at the form of narrative poetry published in Sri Lanka thus far. Thematically, there is primarily a superficial discussion of women’s human rights, but the internal emphasis is on basic human needs that are prejudiced and unjustified due to severe limitations and established paradigms in global politics. This includes intense internal reading about influential and contentious figures in world politics such as Mahatma Gandhi, a revered figure in India; Karl Marx, the father of Marxism; and Hitler, the genocidal. It’s like an invitation to immerse yourself in the political theories they’ve established in the world, which must be deeply and delicately questioned. The “Nari Sutra” recalls the human rights that have been forcibly suppressed until now with the introduction of those political theories.

Velupillai Prabhakaran, leader of the Tamil Liberation Tigers, and Rohana Wijeweera, founder of Janata Vimukthi Peramuna, influential in two internal wars, are both loved and hated by different groups within Sri Lanka's population. The two women who are those characters' wives are also among the cast of characters who appear in this book. The "Nari Sutra" provides a unique vantage point from which to examine their entire life cycle, shattering any superficial political impressions the reader may have formed of the key players.

Throughout the political history and the distribution of power in Sri Lanka, the experiences of women who have been oppressed and mentally abused are discussed at length. There are sixteen (16) women who are frequently discussed as victims of international politics, religious extremism, and tradition, and as women who are oppressed and mentally abused regardless of the country they represent.

Through the "Nari Sutra," it is carefully observed how women are always, as well as in any country of the world, "trampled" at any moment, as well as how women's rights are fragmented in the theoretical conventions of basic human rights.

Each of the women featured in this work is a one-of-a-kind character, regardless of her history, and the reader is given an intimate look at the ugliness that lies within the minds of well-known people who are the inspiration for each of the female characters, while also being given a glimpse into the hearts and minds of the women themselves.

The Nari Sutra is not a poem that can be written just for one particular country, one particular nation, one particular religion, or one particular culture. It is a personal journey that penetrates deeply into the hearts of all women around the world and causes each of us to question the state of our own conscience.

CHINA



Gao Shan

Shan662shan@126.com

illuSalon Co., Ltd

Live-commerce

As an emerging channel with a year-on-year growth of 56.69%, it has the magic to dominate a book’s sales in 2022. “The Right Bank of the Erguna River”, first published 17 years ago, hit the top of fiction books from this July to September, with 500,000 copies sold and 8.5 million RMB (1.8 million USD) revenue, bringing the writer CHI Zijian a royalty around 1.5 million RMB (200K USD) in 2 months. The craze comes from being selected and promoted by the Oriental Select, a black horse livestreaming channel transformed from a traditional education company this year. Under China’s “Double Reduction” policy aiming at lessening the excessive academic burden on students and financial pressure on parents, the Chinese

education giant New Oriental had to close nearly all its after-school tutoring business in 2021, with hundreds of the company’s teachers turning to livestreaming to market produce. Instead of the hard-sell advertising style used by most Chinese live streamers, their laidback attitude and good literacy well match the book purchasing experience. In a short time, Oriental Select becomes an important channel for book retails with a monthly revenue of 25million RMB (3.5million USD) monthly in books category, though it mainly sells agriculture products. However, there is no the newest channel, but newer. Oriental Select might be replaced soon by another brand-new channel, but the e-commerce will keep changing the distributing channels, and till June 22, the

amount of e-commerce users has reached 270 million in China. The online channel has taken 80% of the book retails market share, and it will expand with the new players emerging and wide discount margin between physical and online channels. The average discount in physical book stores is just 10% off, the traditional e-commerce has 46% off, while the emerging live-commerce has achieved 62% off. Although discount promotions can quickly gather traffic, publishers are suffering the lower and lower profits, which is the base for new input and innovations.

Influencers

Being recommended by influencers comes an important factor in books sales. Physical

books of network literature take more than half of the top 10 fiction bestsellers. Cyberspace writers as influencers are the clout themselves, for example, ZHI Chu, the writer of network literature of Everyone is Born to Be Loved, can receive 2 million likes in a short video. With various merchandising, such as bookmarks, Polaroid, cards, etc., his book receives hot rush from fans, who are even willing to pay a premium. Alike the fiction books, the bestsellers in top 3 of non-fiction category “The Complete Book of Food Therapy for 100 Diseases” and “Su Book (Plain Book): Perceiving the Wisdom of Success in the Legendary Book” are listed because they are promoted by social media influencers.

Heat of comic knowledge books

There is a heat of comic knowledge books due to the new “Double Reduction” policy, which booms family education and the demand for functional books reading in family. The fun comic knowledge book well balancing learning and fun is a solution to the pain points and take the all top 3 best sellers of children’s book category in September, which are “Comic Science for Elementary School Students (4 titles)”, “Comic Psychology for Elementary School Students (4 titles)”. This is the Comic Math Children Love to Read (6 Titles)”. Besides of the Top 3, “ Math, Science and Chemistry Turn Out to Be So Interesting”, “I am a Star Student Series” are some of the bests. “The First Law Enlightenment Book for Children”

achieves sales volume of 8 million cps. Not only the kids, because of the longer home time during the epidemic and the increased demand for personal improvement during global economic recession, easy-going knowledge books are welcomed by adults too, such as “The Beauty of Mathematics” and “Wang Liming’s Lectures on Evolution”, presenting difficult professional knowledge in a more accessible way. “The Beauty of Mathematics” has sold 900k copies. It will keep increasing these two years till it reaches saturation point.

China-themed

Publishers are attaching and will attach greater importance to the China-themed publishing

with policy guiding and encouraging. The Incredible Pillar of Great Power is planned corresponding to the increase of China national scientific and technological achievements in primary and secondary schools’ examinations. It personifies the great innovations and super projects into 76 cartoon characters, setting identity and shaping into a super idol for children. What an ingenious idea! It is positioned as a Super-class product, and its publisher, China CITIC Press, provided strong resources in distribution and promotions. In the first 7 days after launching, it sold more than 80,000 copies and got a revenue of 2.56 million RMB (350K USD). The circulation reaches 180,000 copies in two weeks after launching.

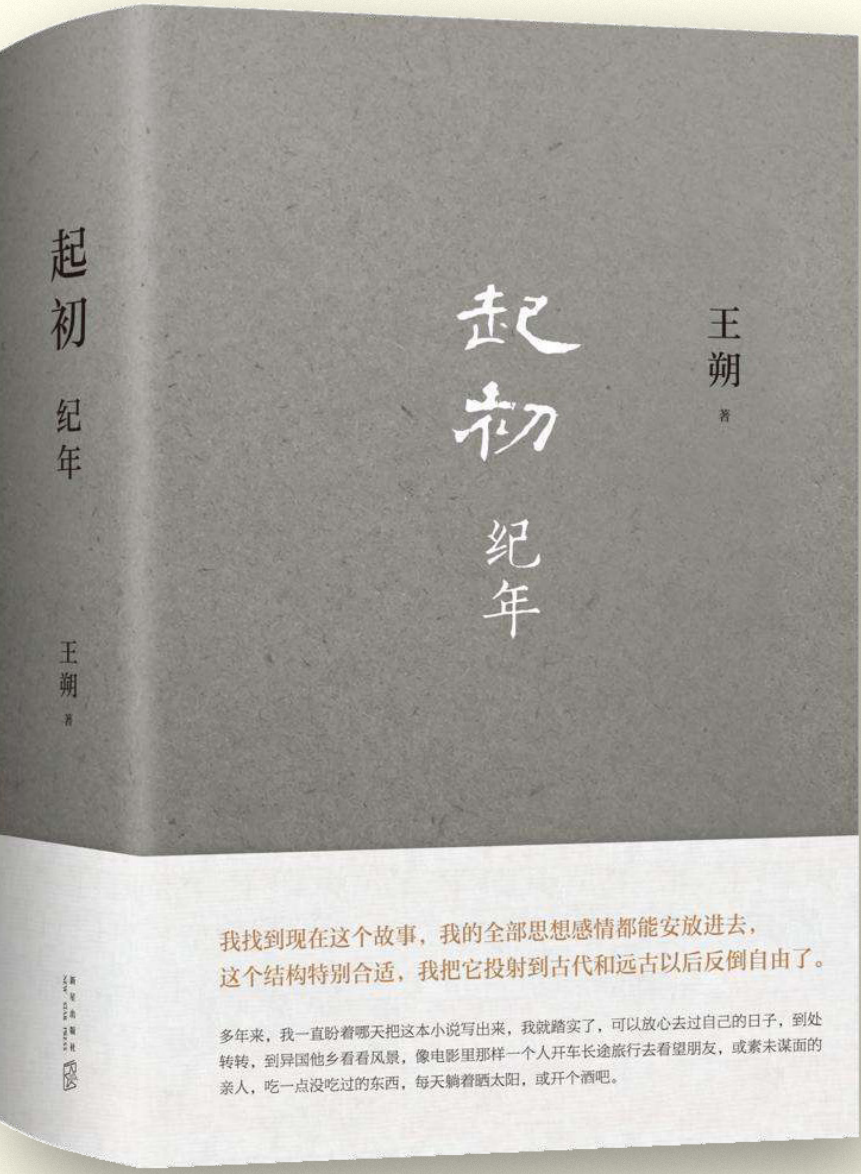
Gold titles phenomenon

In the first three quarters of 2022, the book retail market declined by 13.41% year-on-year and has not yet recovered to the level of 2019. The Matthew effect is more obvious. Gold titles are the focus and target for publisher to make delicacy management on content and channels, when the gold age has passed. Like pareto principle, Gold Titles refer to the products rank top 1% in sales and contribute nearly 60% in revenue. There are 20,000 gold titles in market, nearly half are children’s books, followed by teaching reference books, 8,000 titles; literature, academic culture are more than 1,000 titles. 80% of Chinese publishing houses have gold titles, but most of them have less than 50.

Digital Collections/NFT trials

Since 2021, some Chinese publishers have been trying Digital Collections, a new publishing formats, similar to Non-Fungible Token (NFT), which have achieved a great response in a short period of time. Yangtze River New Century Publishing House, as the first NFT player in publishing field, launched 8,888 copies of NFT products “Twenty Years, the Story of Time”, were sold out in only 20 seconds. With a price of 19.9RMB per copy, the revenue was about 170,000 RMB (23,000 USD). People’s Literature Publishing House launched “Zhengzi Gongye: the dynamic prints of the Five Tiger Generals of Records of the Three Kingdoms” and achieved a total

revenue of 995,000 RMB (137,000USD) only in 2 minutes. As the policy is not clear enough, Chinese publishers just take a small trial, but it shows publishers' keen sense of positive exploring in the digital changes. Digitalization is keeping bringing fast and strong crash to Chinese publishing industry in the past ten years and is deeply changing the infrastructure. An open mind is essential, just like the trials in NFT. I believe this attitude will enable us to take a more proactive position in the present time to meet the possible upcoming Web 3.0 era.



《The Beginning Years》WANG Shuo

The Beginning Years

Mr. Wang Shuo is a Chinese author, director, actor, and cultural icon, who even though absent for a long time, continues to be thought of and discussed. He has published over 20 novels, and as the screenwriter, produced several famous television series and movies. With enormous cultural status in China, is widely considered to be one of China’s most popular and easily recognizable authors.

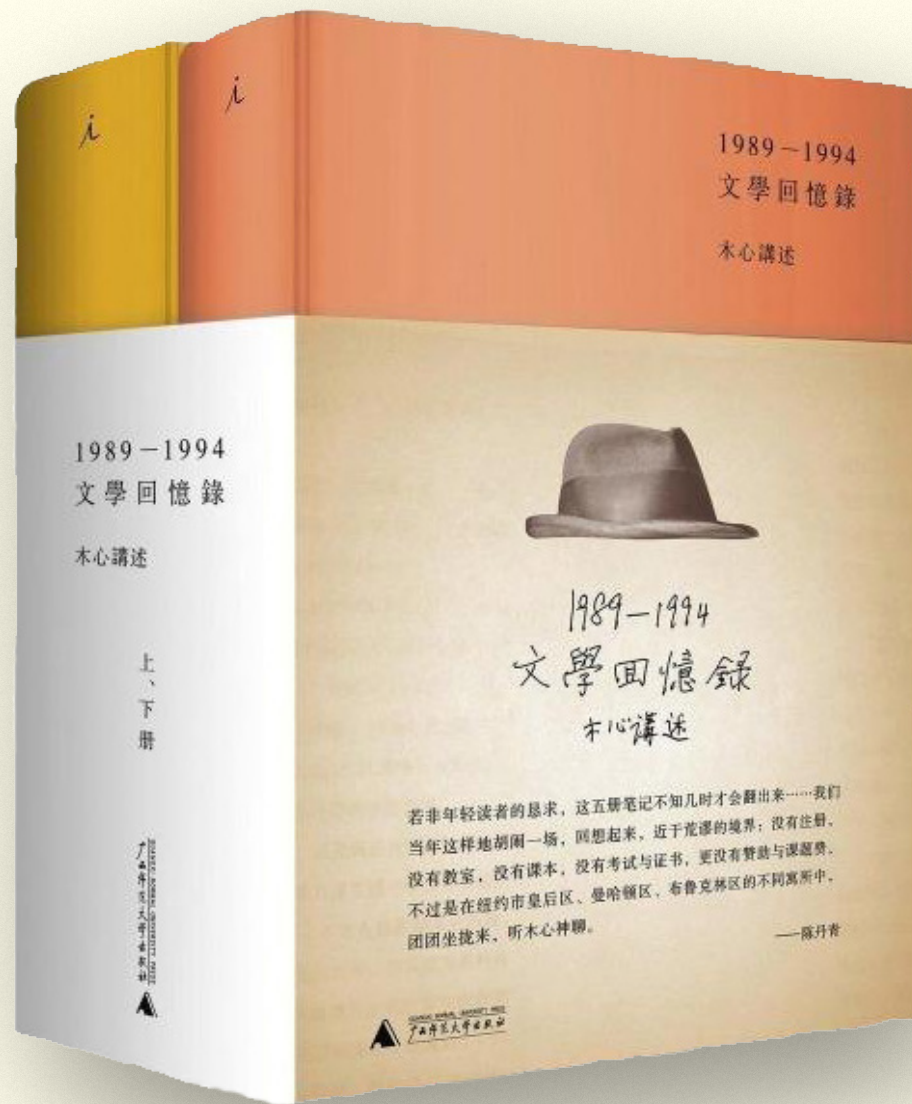
His novel “Wild Beast” has been adapted into awarded film “In the Heat of the Sun” by Chinese famous film director Jiang Wen. “Story in the Editorial Department” started the spring of Chinese television sitcoms. His novels , such as “ Hot and Cold, Measure for Measure”, “ Masters of Mischief “, “Playing for Thrills “ and “ Gone Forever with My Love” have become the memories of a generation of youth in China. Wang Shuo is described by some traditional Chinese book reviewers as a “spiritual pollutant” for his hooligan style of writing. His work describes the culturally confused generation after the Cultural Revolution, marked by rebellious behavior.

It has been 15 years since he published a new book. Published in this August, this book

is the first volume of the coming four volumes of the full-length novel of The Beginning Series. Totally different from his previous works, this book is the stories of Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty (nearly 2200 years ago) , basing on serious historical books, History as a Mirror, Historical Records and Han History. “The historical landscape has its own depths and boundlessness ……This is where I left myself when I got the big delusion that I was ready to explore and covet the sources of our civilization.” WANG Shuo wrote in his own preface. Taking a period of Chinese history as a starting point, he places his own emotions and thoughts into it. With rich imagination and historical knowledges, he tells the story of the life of Emperor Wu from the time he came to power to his death, and also many other full-bodied characters who lived in that time, such as Li Guang, Li Ling, Sima Qian, Zhang Qian, Sima Xiangru, Chen Ajiao, Wei Zifu and Huo Zhaodi.

It is commented that it reaches a new height as a contemporary Chinese novel with both the narrative pattern of a modern Western novel and the rhythm of classical Chinese novels. The historical daily details and writer’s wild imagination bring the historical characters alive to readers. This novel has a great cultural depth, including history, astronomy, geography, meteorology, medicine, mathematics, and physics. ……It is evaluated as a fantastic new “Shuo-style”.

More info: <https://book.douban.com/subject/36055837/>



Memoir of Literature

Reading literature is a kind of healing especially in post epidemic days. This book series is not a textbook with knowledge points of literature histories, but a guideline and feeling with good taste and interest in literature, which helps us understand writers, works and ourselves. As Mu Xin said, “Literature helps us to love, to hate…… I wish everyone could have a good transition.”

Mu Xin was a complex and inspiring figure, he was not only a celebrated artist of abstract landscapes and paintings but equally accomplished as a scholar, poet, and writer. “I have devoted my life to art”, he commented on himself. Mu Xin left over 600 paintings in total, about 500 of which he created in his early life were destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. Mu Xin creatively incorporated the techniques of traditional Chinese paintings and Western paintings, and he is the first, among 20th century Chinese artist, to have artwork collected by the British Museum. He has also made great achievements in literature. Innovatively combining fiction, prose, and philosophical reflections, Mu Xin’s writing is both reminiscent of traditional Chinese culture and western deconstructionism

《Memoir of Literature》

Mu Xin

philosophy. His most famous literary works includes fiction An Empty Room, poem Reminiscence of the past, etc.

In the late 1980s, Mu Xin lived in New York and published 12 literary works, including novels, poetry collections and prose. He sustains the Chinese mode of returning to the art of the past and refreshing it for the present. A group of Chinese intellectuals living in New York were shocked by Mu Xin's charisma and literacy, he was invited to give a lecture on "The History of World Literature". Participants took turns in offering their living rooms, some of them included painters, dancers, historians, sculptors and etc. This literature expenditure lasted for 5 years.

In his five years of speeches on world literary history, Mu Xin spoke about more than one hundred scholars, thinkers, philosophers, and artists.

The book was basing on the notebook of one participant, Mr. Chen Danqing, a very famous painter in China.

More info:

About Mr. Mu Xin :https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ZROlg_1F-8

Video of the last lecture :<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ztHt2XX-DQg>

About the book:<https://book.douban.com/subject/20440644/>



《The Three》Body Problem Series, LIU Cixin

The Three

Written by Chinese author Liu Cixin, the three books in his trilogy tell the story of the first human contact with alien life from the planet called Trisolaris and the conflict between the two species that starts to brew over many years.

The English translation version by Ken Liu was published by Tor Books in 2014. Thereafter, it became the first Asian novel ever to win a Hugo Award for Best Novel, and was nominated for the Nebula Award for Best Novel.

The author, Liu Cixin was an engineer before writing science fiction. His first published short story, Whalesong, was published in Science Fiction World in June 1999, and in the same year his novel With Her Eyes won the Galaxy Award. In 2000 he wrote The Wandering Earth and received the Galaxy Award again. The Wandering Earth was adapted into a film in 2019. When the short story Mountain appeared in January 2006, many readers wrote to him that they hoped he would write a novel. Therefore, he decided to concentrate on novel-length texts rather than on short stories. The other two famous novels besides The Three-Body Problem series are Supernova Era and Ball Lightning.

As one of Netflix’s most ambitious and expensive sci-fi series, the books’ adaptation series will launch soon. It’s been said that the creators plan to “treat the books with the largest amount of respect”. 24 episodes are being produced for the series, with each episode is about 60 minutes in length. There is no official information on the release date of Three-Body Problem, but it won’t be until at least 2023 when it drops on Netflix.

So, if you haven’t read it yet, you are strongly suggested to grab one and read before it hit the screen.

KOREA



CHOE Hyerie

chr@willbookspub.com

Will Books Publishing Co.

Craze for script books of dramas and movies

Not quite new though, this trend is definitely becoming more notable in 2022, and many publishers including Will Books are very interested in it. Script books or photo essays adapted from hit dramas on Korean TV or OTT platforms like 〈Our beloved summer〉, 〈The red sleeve〉, and 〈Extraordinary attorney Woo〉 sold very well at bookstores.

Not only in dramas, but it was also the same in movies. In case of the movie [Decision to leave] released this year, it was not as popular as the so-called ‘10 million-viewers movie’ though, it had a very concrete fan base who wanted to recall every single scene of the work filled with hidden meanings and beauty, which made its script book stand out and sweep the

top 3 online bookstores in Korea. In addition to the successful works this year, even older hit dramas were re-born in this format, and its good example was 〈Take care of my cat: 20th Anniversary archive〉.

Traditionally, it was common to keep video, DVD, Blu-ray, etc. when people enjoyed dramas or movies so much. However, nowadays, it is the norm to watch them via OTT platforms such as NETFLIX, and people desire to own them in a more original form that is a book, especially a script or a storyboard.

‘Adults’ and ‘Literacy’ – Wants for better communication

〈Vocabulary study for adults〉, 〈Literacy for adults〉, 〈Writing skills for adults〉… Recently

in Korea, the keywords ‘Adults’ and ‘Literacy’, which enhance relationships with people and speaking & writing skills, are standing out both in practical books and humanities books at bookstores. And up until this summer, the number of publications related to vocabulary, literacy, writing, and grammar was 116 having an increase of more than 40% year on year. 〈Korean nuance dictionary〉, which explains the difference in nuance and helps spruce up the language in use, is one of the books many readers are buying. It shows there is a demand for writing and speaking skills to be used throughout social life with grace. In recent years, there have been issues of misunderstandings or happenings caused by bad comprehension due to Sino-Korean

words, idiomatic expressions, and unfamiliar vocabulary among various generations and classes. This trend seems a reflection of the frustrating mind of many readers for that and their wants for having good comprehension to communicate well on social issues, beyond the simple understanding of text and words.

A new trend in ‘writing’ and writing techniques
Besides traditional writing books dealing with the writer’s attitude and skills, many new books about writing techniques, in between humanities and practical books, that pinpoint the needs of writers in each genre, are showing a strong presence. The number of writers registered on writing platforms online has increased a lot throughout the world as

well as in Korea. Web novels in particular, have established themselves as an important form and a genre of literature, having a wide readership, perhaps larger than that of traditional novels. In addition, genre novels that do not belong to traditional novels, like sci-fi, fantasy, romance, and healing books, have also become popular. And the number of ‘creators’ who earn money by developing various content on YouTube has increased as well. In line with this environment, more and more publishers are publishing various writing books tailored to various readers. We, Will Books, have published dictionary series for writers including 〈Trauma dictionary〉 and 〈Dilemma dictionary〉 as well as other series including 〈How to make my writing a work〉, and are receiving good

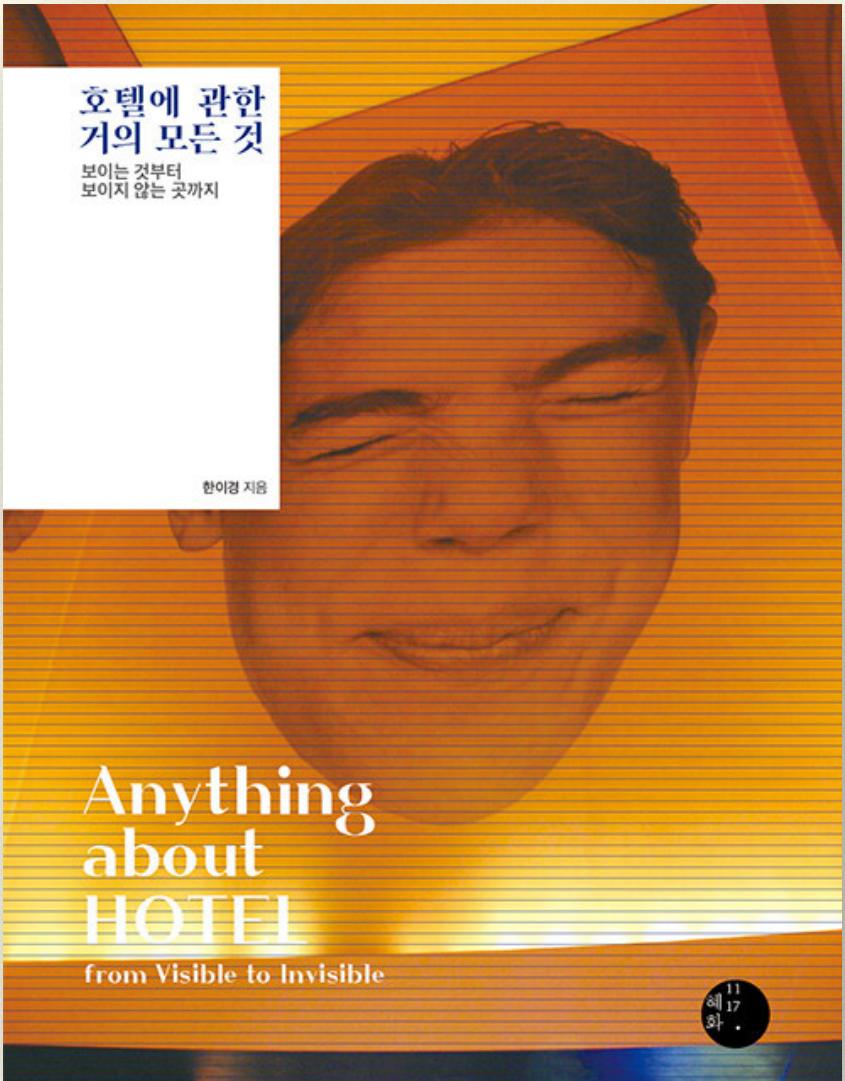
responses from the market.

Steady popularity of books on money and investment, and recent change
Along with the global trend of quantitative easing during the pandemic and the popularity of books for studying money and investment has continued for more than 2 years in Korea. However, since the middle of this year, global inflation emerged and the decline in the stock, real estate, and coin market became noticeable. The popularity of those practical how-to-invest books has waned a little accordingly. Instead, books that talk about fundamental principles, as well as the mental management for investment, are becoming striking.

Even in this difficult time, we are trying to discover original titles or manuscripts that readers are likely looking for. Because, even in a recession, there are readers who still look for books when they face issues and emotions that they think are important. We are proud to say that the above-mentioned 〈Q&A books for adults〉 and dictionaries for writers like 〈Trauma dictionary〉, 〈Dilemma dictionary〉, and 〈Character's vocations dictionary〉 have established a fairly solid position in line with this. We will keep searching for answers to any specific requests readers might make.

It is necessary, as unbiased as possible, to imagine, search, and get close to the readers who will welcome each book. In Korea, when

publishing books, the most common image of readers is wandering around bookstores in downtown Seoul, such as Gwanghwamun, trying to figure out what book to buy, but actual readers could find books in unexpected places. It could be a YouTube channel or an online shopping mall that each one subscribes to, or, a sandwich shop or a yoga center that each one frequents. We will make each of them discover the existence of books in their usual spaces or platforms.



Anything about Hotel, from visible to invisible

A book inviting you to the real and detailed world of hotels which are complex and exciting spaces. (Published in Dec. 2021) A book unique and interesting, full of rich knowledge and vivid photos with witty words by a more than 30-year veteran of making hotels. Anyone, either those who use hotels or who design and operation hotels will have a head nodding at this book, full of thrilling experiences and details.

《Anything about Hotel, from visible to invisible》
by HAN Leekyung, Hyehwa1117



Mellow City Mellow Pop

Recently, there have been many humanities books on pop culture in Korea that have personal essay quality while having artistic considerations and historical characteristics. I consider this book to be the most interesting to read among the books that have been retrospected from a personal-social point of view and archived covering pop culture up to the 2000s.

《Mellow City Mellow Pop》 by Kim Younha, Kim Haksun, Park Jungyong, Kim Kwanghyun, Wisdom House



Old movies, I should have known them earlier

Djuna, a famous sci-fi writer and film critic with enormous cinematic knowledge and experience, emphasizes the need to watch 'old movies' in an age full of content and OTT platforms and presents the old movies that we do not know much about and the history and humanistic stories hidden in them. This book introduces a lot of old movies from all over the world in a very witty way, so I think it will be quite universal and interesting for readers from any culture, including Asia.

《Old movies, I should have known them earlier》
by Djuna, Gufic

KOREA



PARK Kyu-Min

min@gimmyoung.com

Viche (a literary imprint of Gimm-Young Publishers)

Quiet People in the Last Line: Today of Korean Publishing in Literature

Once I have been to a distribution warehouse, located in the northernmost part of Korea. I was there for work, but it still remains in my mind. It was in a remote area where North Korea could be seen at a dim distance and it was full of plastic–wrapped books published from all over the country. I couldn’t help tapping on a calculator in a such place. It was because keeping books must cost even in a such place. It was because we should build a warehouse where land was cheap, to make a bit more of a profit. In order to make one book, how many hands it has to be gone through? It has to be planned, written, designed, produced,

delivered, stored, and managed. It goes without saying that it needs to be marketed and promoted. Being displayed at bookstores doesn’t mean that it sells. I do not know much about the situation in other countries, but I know that it needs some amount of money to buy promotional tables at bookstores in Korea. So when entering the bookstore, book covers are emitting light like neon signs on the streets in Korea, as if they are begging for picking them up.

We, Viche, are specialized in literature though, the question of the range of literature is always following us. Today, the keywords of literature publishing are ultimately convergent with this question. Is writing fiction literature? Then, isn’t

nonfiction literature? A book with illustrations, for instance, comics, is it literature? Thinking about it over and over, then, it comes to the conclusion that literature is defined with the consent of readers of the time. We are carrying on our business with a motto: we cover all “from Korean literature to world literature, from traditional literature to genre literature, visual books for the image generation.” We are publishing genre fiction by young writers as well as prose by established poets. We are also planning new writers’ literary fiction that cannot be classified as a genre. We keep presenting works of world–class authors including Matsuie Masashi, Minato Kanae, Wu Ming–yi, and Annie Ernaux. Once we have published so–called ‘Instatoons’ being uploaded on Instagram into

paper books. And we are carrying forward a plan of making web novels into books as well.

We are not the only publisher who does various attempts. Some publishers plan books following the trend, and some build marketing strategies for not-trendy books to show them as trendy. The drama script book's case falls under the former. Scripts from OTT platform dramas such as 〈Our beloved summer〉 and 〈Extraordinary attorney Woo〉 and movies like 〈Decision to leave〉 are receiving a lot of love not only on screens but also in bookstores. Beyond the simple script itself, they make the script books that fans of the dramas or the movies want to keep, by adding behind stories of characters and detailed settings. There is

also a case that a book published years ago, shows itself again in the spotlight by being adapted for the screen. In the case of the novel 〈Good-bye, Yonder〉, as it was adapted into drama by director LEE Jun-Ik, the book was released again in the market with a new cover.

On the other hand, there are more cases to market traditional literature to fit into the current market situation. The case of Octavia Butler's novels can be one of the good examples. 〈Kindred〉 and 〈Bloodchild〉 were originally published as a part of our classic series, but with a rising issue of feminism, we thought we should not keep them staying only on the shelves of classics. Therefore, we presented the limited edition of them with

new covers which the young generation might like, and we got good responses in the market. And, Wisdom House made a brilliant case in the market by designing its classic literature covers, including 〈Demian〉 by Herman Hesse, with illustrations by famous webtoon artists. For great works of literature of all time, we should make them come out of the boring old frame.

All the above is one side of Korean publishing in literature. I feel like I am the slowest person in the world when I work on books. I feel like I am following slowly from the back seat while the world is changing so fast. When I feel like that, I recall the sight of the warehouse. The sight of books, longing for the moment to meet with

readers, which were piled up so high that you had to be lifted by a crane like Aladdin’s magic carpet to see. Seeing today of the publishing market, there are some new nice tries, there are which aren’t. That makes me feel like supporting them, but at the same time, that makes me feel a little bitter. But I do believe that we all are sharing the desire to make good content, even slowly. I dare imagine that you who are reading this, might feel the same. We, Korean publishers, will make books slowly and slowly even today, thinking that we are connected to publishers from the whole Asia and from the whole world.



A planet of bread-loving villains

A collection of sci-fi short stories written by KWAK Jae-Sik who is a sci-fi writer as well as a writer often appearing on TV with a witty way of talking. This book is of 10 short stories that can be easily accessible both by whom like Sci-fi stories and by whom meet Sci-fi for the first time. Stories like only one person being left on the earth, an extraterrestrial report on observing humans, and a character learning that he is in a game, etc., are unfolded with the author's ingenious imagination.

《A planet of bread-loving villains》

by KWAK Jae-Sik



Ruth with a cigarette

If somebody asks me to recommend only one Korean sci-fi, then I would hand this over, <Ruth with a cigarette> by Leezy. To sum up in a word, this is a novel about youth in Korea, but it is never enough to be presented just in a word, like other good novels. The narrator is the main character working in a mysterious pub called 'Weather Lab' and depicts our messy life in a way very relatable and beautiful together with her friends and customers at the pub.

《Ruth with a cigarette》 by Leezy



Broccoli Punch

If somebody asks me to recommend a novel that depicts the Korean youth of today most closely, then I would hand this over, 〈Broccoli Punch〉 by LEE Yuri. This is the writer’s first collection of short stories. It is not easy to categorize her stories into a certain genre. The stories are full of imaginations popping out like sparkling water and never possible to be called by anything from existing genres. I dare say that each of her stories has incredible imagination which is much over the latest dramas on OTT platforms. I definitely recommend this one to whom want to know an unconditionally interesting Korean novel.

《Broccoli Punch》 by LEE Yuri

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