

The Wonderful Adventures of Floris Books: Swedish Children's Books from Edinburgh

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Abstract

This article addresses the theme of Nordic books abroad: Floris Books is the most prolific publisher of Scandinavian children's books in the United Kingdom. This innovative paper will detail the history of the press, its publishing philosophy for children's fiction and adult non-fiction, and the continued dedication of Floris Books to promote high-quality and 'wholesome' Swedish and other European children's literature to a British and international audience.

While addressing issues such as author, text and translator selection, and editorial and financial considerations, this article casts light on the press's contribution to promoting Swedish children's literature to a wide and growing audience.

Key words

Swedish children's literature, translation, British publishing

Introduction

This article addresses the theme of Nordic books abroad and is written in the context of PhD research surveying and evaluating the British translation and publishing of Nordic children's literature since 1950: Floris Books is currently the most prolific publisher of Swedish children's books in the United Kingdom. This paper examines the press's contribution to promoting Swedish children's literature to a growing audience both within the UK and abroad. Issues considered in detail are the history of the press and its publishing philosophy for children's fiction and adult non-fiction, as well as author and text selection for its output of Swedish and Scandinavian fiction and picture books. What are the editorial challenges for working with material of this type, and how has the press been able to create and retain a niche market in today's market? Finally, two competitor English-language publishers of Swedish picture books are considered. This article is predominantly based on an interview with founding publisher Christian Maclean carried out in February 2012, and uncited quotations are taken from this source.

The Early History and Publishing Philosophy of Floris Books

Today Floris Books is an independent publisher with adult non-fiction strengths in 'organics, holistic health, mind body spirit, child development, alternative education, religion and spirituality'.¹ A strong range of children's books includes classic story books, international picture books, and Scottish titles in the Kelpies fiction and picture book series. Some sixty new titles are published annually, with a backlist of 600 titles and nine members of staff including four editors.²

In 1977, Christian Maclean, owner of a small independent bookshop in Morningside, Edinburgh, took over a small religious publishing house.³ Based in London, the then Christian Community Press had from the early 1930s established a strong reputation for publishing religious works, particularly translations from German texts (including works on Rudolf Steiner). Shortly before Maclean's involvement, the publishing house relocated to Edinburgh and was renamed after the

medieval heretic Joachim de Flora. From 1977, the backlist of religious titles was reissued under the name Floris Books. The aim for the new press was to widen the existing list from a religious remit and to include good quality children's books. Maclean quickly got started on a part-time basis, building up the lists gradually from a modest one-man operation to what is now the largest publisher of children's books in Scotland, as well as publishing extensive non-fiction titles for adults.

With Canongate Books no longer pursuing its interests in the children's book trade, Floris Books purchased from them the well-established Kelpie list of Scottish children's fiction in 2001. This list featured classic titles and authors such as Mollie Hendry's *Quest for a Kelpie* and Kathleen Ridler's *The Desperate Journey*. Floris were able to increase the list to some 40+ titles, focusing on Scottish themes and settings for 8-12 year olds, as well as relaunching the annual Kelpies Prize in 2005 in order to encourage new Scottish writing for children. Younger Scottish readers became a priority, with the introduction of a Young Kelpies list for younger readers and the launch of the Picture Kelpie series of Scottish picture books in 2010, aimed at 3-6 year olds. The Press also runs two websites for their children readers, Discover Kelpies and Picture Kelpies.⁴

Author and Text Selection in European Children's Book

The success of the Picture Kelpies list has been built on the already well-established range of European children's picture books published by Floris Books. Marketed as 'international picture books', these form one of the cornerstones of the Floris children's list⁵ with Swedish titles amongst the first to appear in the late 1970s. This decision by the press to focus on translated children's literature was extremely timely: Floris Books were able to build upon the so-called 'golden age' of juvenile translation taking place within mainstream British publishing houses from the 1950s to the 1970s (Berry 2011). During this period, good levels of public funding for school and libraries ensured profitability for minority publishing interests such as juvenile fiction in translation, a vibrant review scene brought these titles to the attention of education and library professionals, and European children's editors

were keen to see their picture books published in the UK. As children's literature in translation fell into a decline during the 1980s, Floris proved subsequently willing and able to plug the emerging gap in the translation market.

Above average linguistic editorial competency within the Floris publishing staff has meant that prospective European titles can be quickly evaluated for their publishing potential. 'That always helps, because you can look at the thing, get the gist, say "Yes, this looks like a good book"... But again with picture books, you are mainly looking at the pictures. If the pictures are good, then we know it will work' (Personal interview, Christian Maclean, 27 February 2012). These titles have been sourced by the press through a wide variety of means as a consequence of attending international children's book fairs, tip offs from book distributors or editors from other European children's publishers, or by other means.

Swedish Fiction for Children

The press's first Swedish title to appear for children was a fiction title *Christ legends*⁶ (1977) by the Swedish Nobel Laureate Selma Lagerlöf (1858-1940). Available in a 1908 American translation by Velma Swanston Howard, Lagerlöf's principal English translator, and with rights negotiated by Floris from Bonniers and Lagerlöf's executors, this was illustrated by G and V Knapp and started a tradition of Christmas titles for children which continues to be pursued today. This title was followed by *Mary's Little Donkey* by Swedish teacher Gunhild Sehlin (1911-1996) in 1979, spotted by Maclean abroad on a book-hunting mission: this was then commissioned by Floris in a new translation by Hugh Latham, who was already known to the press (as a friend of a friend) to be a translator of German and Swedish.⁷ However, despite these two translated titles and a number of British authored story books featuring Norse, Swedish and Icelandic tales and British retellings of Andersen and Grimm fairy tales, translated European fiction for children has not yet been seriously developed by the press, which has its interests very firmly directed instead towards the international picture book.

Swedish Picture Books: Selma Lagerlöf and Elsa Beskow

Having earned a favourable reception of the two Swedish fiction titles by Lagerlöf and Sehlin, the press were in a position to take on other Swedish authors new to the British audience through the genre of picture book titles. A chance meeting at the Frankfurt Book Fair with a Dutch children's editor informed Christian Maclean that the English rights were available for Elsa Beskow's picture books. These were already known to Maclean through his German bilingual upbringing, which included a good dose of German and Scandinavian titles including Lagerlöf and Beskow. *The Children of the Forest* and *Peter in Blueberry Land* were published by Floris in 1987, having previously been published by London publisher Ernest Benn in 1982 with English versions by Alison Sage.⁸

Elsa Beskow (1874-1953) was not entirely unknown to the British reading public, with her illustrations featuring in a 1900 edition of poetry by T E M Dick and in F Berg's *Swedish Fairy Tales* in 1904. As the biographical afterword in *Ollie's Ski Trip* (1989) describes, she combined strong interests in flora and fauna with training at art school, initially writing a series of picture books for her six sons (ultimately completing over thirty titles) as well as illustrating numerous editions of fairy tales. Beskow's only single-authored work to be translated into English appears to be *Pelle's New Suit*, translated by Marion Letcher Woodburn, although this was published solely in New York by Harper & Brothers. Beskow also co-authored *My Rainy Day: a Handword Book for Children* (1938) with Anna Warburg, but otherwise there has been a limited representation of her works within the British book trade during the first part of the twentieth century.⁹

Initially, Maclean thought he had made a mistake in judgement in taking on Beskow as a Floris author, as he initially encountered problems in selling her titles to British book retailers and library suppliers. One book buyer had produced two dusty copies of two Benn titles from the depths of their warehouse, which they had not been able to sell, and they were not prepared to take on any further Beskow titles.¹⁰ However, the books were received positively at the American Book Fair shortly afterwards and Floris Books were able to make a deal with a

US children's book distributor as a result. From that point, as many as 80-90% of Beskow's titles were sold directly to US retailers. As Maclean comments, 'it just grew and grew from there' until 'we were selling them like hotcakes in America. We rapidly became Bonniers' best-selling [foreign] customer'. The four most popular titles are currently *The Children of the Forest*, *Peter in Blueberry Land*, *Pelle's New Suit* and *The Sun Egg*. Eleven titles were published in quick succession from 1987, but after the reissue of Benn's 1980 edition of *The Sun Egg* (1994), no new Beskow titles were published for a number of years. However, renewed interest from 2001 has steadily resulted in a further eleven titles, including two published during 2012.

Other Scandinavian Authors and Illustrators

More recently, the press has experimented with picture book titles by other Scandinavian authors, all published as international co-editions. This new strategy has partly been developed in response to the fact that only a limited number of 'new' Beskow titles remain available to be published by Floris in the future. It also follows the popular publishing method of targeting high quality titles from awardwinning authors which have already established a strong market elsewhere. These picture book titles are typically instigated by the originating publisher (often to coincide with their own scheduled reprints of a popular title), who sells foreign rights on a chosen title to overseas publishers who then help to share the production costs. The original illustrations and layout are provided to the purchasing publisher, who then provides the text in the target language to be laid over the top.

Selma Lagerlöf's picture book *The Wonderful Adventures of Nils* appeared in 1992 as a revised edition by Rebecca Alsberg, translated by Joan Tate and with illustrations by Lars Klinting.¹¹ This was followed in 2004 by *The Holy Night*, illustrated by Ilon Wikland and translated by Velma Swanston Howard, which was an abridgement of Lagerlöf's *The Emperor's Vision and Other Christ Legends* (2002). Several titles of Astrid Lindgren (1907-2002) have also been published through collaborations with her Swedish publisher Rabén & Sjögren, beginning with *The Tomten* and *The Tomten and the Fox* in 1992. First published

in the UK by Constable in the 1960s, these two picture books were illustrated by Harald Wiberg. These Lindgren titles were followed by *A Calf for Christmas* (2010), *Goran's Great Escape* (2011) and *In the Land of Twilight* (2012), all three of which were rendered into English by children's author Polly Lawson¹² and originally illustrated for Rabén & Sjögren in the late 1980s and 1990s by Marit Törnqvist. The Floris Christmas picture book trend is continued by Sven Nordqvist (1946-) with *The Tomtes' Christmas Porridge* (2011) in addition to German and Dutch titles by Else Wenz-Viertor, Ineke Verschuren, Loek Koopmans, Gerda Muller and Daniela Drescher.

Two picture books by Swedish author Martha Sandwall-Bergström (1913-2000) form a prequel to her popular *Kulla Gulla* series published by Bonniers from 1945 which was partly translated by Joan Tate in six *Anna* titles and published by Blackie in the 1970s. These prequels to the series were published by Bonniers in 1986 and 1987 and were taken on by Floris Books as *Goldie at the Orphanage* (2004) and *Goldie at the Farm* (2005), retaining the original illustrations by Eva Stålsjö.

However, there has been little interest hitherto in picture books from elsewhere in the Nordic countries, one exception being the internationally acclaimed *Go to Sleep, Little Bear* (2005) by Jan Mogensen (1945-) which unusually appeared in the UK in the same year of its original publication in Denmark.

Editorial Challenges

Picture book publishing is a challenging editorial area within (translated) literature for children, uniquely combining images and text for the very young reader. Differences in target audiences and therefore in reading ability for different age groups between various European countries can prove problematic when culturally transferring texts between languages. Picture books on the continent tend to be aimed at older children than is generally accepted in the UK and the US and often contain a much higher proportion of text to image, such as in *Ollie's Ski Trip* where the proportion of pictures to text is often equal. It is possibly for this reason that the picture books of Astrid Lindgren and Tove Jansson have never proved as successful in the Anglo-Saxon world

(when compared to the popular *Moomin* and other full-length fiction titles). Here the compulsory school starting age is lower and a higher level of literacy at a younger age is generally expected, resulting in an earlier transition from picture books to fiction.

As a consequence, a number of Beskow titles have not been taken on by Floris Books, although over ten titles still remain unavailable in English. As Maclean explains, such titles have 'far more text and a little less pictures... We tend to say if it has more than five lines on a page, forget it! On the continent, they will cheerfully have sold pages of text with one picture. It doesn't really work in this country [as a picture book]'. In some cases, the longer source text may therefore need to be adapted for a younger audience for the resulting target text. However, as Maclean notes, 'with picture books there is not so much of a problem as there is not much text. There are only a few lines on every page and you have got to follow the pictures. So you can't screw it up too badly'.

Issues of translation can be problematic, with highly compacted texts and limited space within the page layout sometimes proving difficult. Translation is not undertaken in a systematic way at Floris Books. It is often unclear whether translations or adaptations/versions have been used by Floris Books, and this fact does not appear to be an issue to the editorial staff whose prime concern is that the text becomes readable and suitable for the target child. Although the European qualities of the international picture books are emphasised by Floris Books, the fact that they are translations is not accentuated. Rarely is the translator cited on the title page, included instead typically in the small print of the copyright/imprint page at the start or end of the volume.

Occasionally, existing translations or versions are used, such as for *Pelle's New Suit* which utilised an early 20th century American translation by Marion Letcher Woodburn. Likewise, the English Beskow translations by Ernest Benn from the 1980s were used in all the later Floris editions. At Benn, a literal translation provided to the purchasing publisher was edited in-house, on this occasion by Alison Sage. Sometimes Sage is cited, but often no translator's name is given and the British publisher alone is cited for the English version. Similarly, author

and editor Polly Lawson was responsible for two 'English versions' in 2001 and 2002 as well as for the 'translation' of the latest three Astrid Lindgren picture book titles. This approach, which involves a more proactive contribution by the editor, seems to be the favoured one for the press, and is one which reduces translation costs as well as providing a higher level of editorial control within the translation process.

More rarely, a professional Scandinavian translator is commissioned directly by Floris to translate into a polished and final version. For example, Joan Tate is cited as the translator for five Beskow titles published between 1988 and 1991¹³ and her name is included on the title page of *The Wonderful Adventures of Nils*. Similarly, Swede and Floris author Kristin Turner is translator of the latest Beskow title *Rosalind and the Little Deer* (2012).

The American audience also has to be considered during translation and editing, since this undoubtedly form a high proportion of Floris' customer base. 'Unintelligible or ambiguous words' are therefore weeded out by the editorial staff, although British spelling which Americans often regard as 'archaic, nostalgic, quaint and old-fashioned' is deliberately retained as this makes a positive contribution to the press's overall publishing strategy for children's picture books.

Floris Books as a 'Niche Market' in Children's Publishing

Floris Books has been able to establish and retain a niche market for a particular type of Swedish (and European) picture book, which banks on the appeal of a 'nostalgic time-gone-by' product to a distinct customer base. This has proved an oddly innovative strategy when compared to the highly modern and groundbreaking Swedish picture books made available in the UK during the 1960s and 1970s, tackling controversial subject areas and introducing new styles of illustration to the British market. For Floris, the high quality of the hardback edition and its cloth spine have both proved essential as part of this overall retail strategy for its traditional European picture books.¹⁴ In business terms, it is vital that this hitherto successful publishing ethos is protected, promoted and developed.

The blurbs and reviews included within each entry on the firm's comprehensive online catalogue emphasise particularly the high quality of the illustrations and artwork. In the view of one satisfied customer, Elsa Beskow's artistic style has the 'old-fashioned feel and colour that a good Nordic 'Heimat' film does for me as an adult' (*Peter and Lotta's Christmas*). Beskow's 'delicate playful illustrations' are celebrated in her edition of *Around the Year. The Land of Long Ago* features Beskow's 'illustrations in her unique classic style' and her latest Floris title *Rosalind and the Little Deer* has similarly 'beautiful detailed illustrations'. The distinctive Nordic illustration style and subject is emphasised in the other Floris picture books titles, such as the 'traditional Swedish landscape' in Lindgren's *A Calf for Christmas*, the 'Nordic feel' illustrations in Lindgren's *Goran and the Great Escape* and Törnqvist's 'beautifully painted, quiet moonlit scenes' in *The Tomten*. Mogensen's 'beautiful, soft-focus illustrations' are praised, along with Stålsjö's 'delicate and detailed watercolours' in Sandwall-Bergström's *Goldie* titles and Nordqvist's 'detailed cartoon art... [which] has a warm and cozy look' in *The Tomtes' Christmas Porridge*.

Narrative qualities seem less important for promotional purposes than the illustrations, perhaps not surprising given the primarily visual nature of the picture book genre. 'Heartwarming' is used to describe the story of both *A Calf for Christmas* and *Goldie at the Farm*, and the 'traditional fairy-tale charm', 'delightful verses', 'characteristic humour' and 'fairy-tale quality of the text' are emphasized in many of Beskow's works. All of these characteristics are similarly accentuated throughout the entire European picture book series of Floris Books, where the preference for titles featuring snowy and wintry landscapes of Northern Europe is strong and prevalent. An obvious correlation with the British tradition for picture books in a comparable strain, such as Beatrix Potter, Kate Greenaway and the *Flower Fairies*, has also been a point in favour of the publishing strategy of Floris Books in this area.

Growing the Business

Sourcing new titles which encompass the favoured 'old-fashioned and the nostalgic' elements in order to expand the Floris list and customer

base can prove challenging over time, with a fine line to be trodden between innovation and established tradition. International book fairs remain a key method of identifying new authors of interest, in addition to the network of professional contacts which Floris Books has built up over the last 35 years. However, changes in picture book style over the years can create problems for a publisher focusing on the very 'traditional' picture book. Tastes and trends inevitably change over time. As Maclean comments, 'some things which worked some years ago don't work at all now. The Beskow sales have been slowing down a little in the last four or five years. They are still quite strong but not as much as they once were'. As Maclean goes on to explain, 'more modern picture books... get a bit more cartoony... There is an awful lot of stuff that we get shown [to] which we just instantly say "No"'.

As well as editorial considerations, the practical logistics and economics of book production and retail also need to be considered in detail in order for the business to remain viable. Sales are examined on a monthly basis, with the bestsellers (and bottomsellers) evaluated in detail, as Maclean outlines:

These are the kinds of books which are more or less successful. What is the common thread in them? These are the kinds of things... we should try to do more of and try to develop them and go from there, without losing the ability to experiment every now and then, doing something totally different. It sometimes works and it sometimes doesn't. But that is publishing. I think it is just a sophisticated form of gambling!

With a substantial Floris backlist, gauging potential customer interest in low-stock older titles via internet secondhand bookstores can help the editorial and management team to inform decisions about whether to reprint a title or whether to go out of print. Floris has often solved this problem by taking a title out of print and then publishing a new revised edition. Print runs also need to be managed prudently in the light of rising storage costs for printed stock. The first Beskow picture book printruns would typically number about 3,000, although popular Beskow titles would later reprint up to 8,000 copies. Today,

it would be unusual for print runs on a picture book to exceed 1,500-2,000.

Innovative products can help to tempt new customers to purchase Elsa Beskow items for the first time as a precursor to buying the fully priced picture books. From 2005 it has been possible to buy a cheaper smaller sized hardback 'mini-edition' of the most popular Beskow titles.¹⁵ Floris Books also began at a similar time to experiment with visual merchandise such as packs of artists' postcards featuring four designs in each set, including an Elsa Beskow series as well as *Tomte* cards by Swedish illustrator Harald Wiberg (these are no longer available). More recently, an Elsa Beskow calendar was launched in 2011, appealing to the established Beskow customer.

With an established market in the US and the UK, Floris is able to promote its name and reputation further by performing an additional important function as an intermediary between the original Swedish publisher and interested publishers from other countries. Typically, editors from these countries are unable to read the text in the original language and therefore wish to have access to an English-language edition before negotiating for rights for their own market.¹⁶

Negotiating UK or worldwide English language rights for Swedish picture books has not proved a problem for Floris Books thus far. The very low levels of interest generally displayed by British publishers in translated titles has stood in their favour over time, as there has been little competition for titles from elsewhere in the UK. As Maclean observed, 'Red carpet treatment, wherever we went'.

New Kids on the Swedish Children's Publishing Block

Apart from the active presence of Floris Books in the UK for the past 35 years, there has been little prolonged Nordic publishing activity elsewhere apart with the British children's book trade, with the exception of Oxford University Press and R & S Books. OUP is currently publishing a series of new editions of the fiction of Astrid Lindgren, building on their reputation as the first British publisher of Lindgren's *Pippi Longstocking* (1954). This project has been running for several years and continues to expand, including reissues and/or

new translations of titles previously published by other UK publishing houses.¹⁷ Swedish publisher Rabén & Sjögren published a lengthy series of English-language picture books in the 1990s and 2000s, which were jointly published in London and Stockholm.

Further afield, Gecko Press in New Zealand have begun to take on a number of Swedish picture books titles as part of their broader list of 'curiously good books' which focuses predominantly on publishing international children's fiction and picture book titles with the 'heart factor'. Founding Kiwi publisher Julia Marshall was based in Sweden for twelve years working within corporate magazine publishing and eventually established Gecko Press in New Zealand in 2004-2005, making good use of her existing contacts in publishing and literature. Nearly ninety titles are now available from ten countries, with twelve to fifteen new titles planned each year. *Donkeys* by Austrian author Adelheid Dahimene was the first title to appear in July 2005. As with Floris Books, Gecko Press also handle worldwide English rights for some titles and authors. Other English-speaking markets, including the UK, are reached via international distributors such as Bounce!

Marshall's linguistic skills in Swedish almost uniquely enable her to translate singlehandedly Gecko's titles from Swedish into English as well as enabling her to source inspirational Swedish 'award-winning books with heart',¹⁸ such as the press's first Swedish title *The Fox Hunt* (2005) by Sven Nordqvist. This was followed by other Nordqvist picture book titles in the popular *Findus and Pettson* series, as well as three picture books by the well established author-illustration partnership of Ulf Nilsson and Eva Eriksson and also *Can You Whistle, Johanna?* by Ulf Stark. Two titles from Barbro Lindgren and Eva Eriksson's *Max* series of board books for very young children appeared in 2008, superseding with new translations the Methuen *Sam* series from the 1980s. Gecko also publish Swedish children's fiction in the form of four novels by Ulf Stark including the *Percy* series. A first Norwegian title *Kurt Blir Grusom* (1995) by Erlend Loe is planned for publication in 2013.¹⁹

UK-based Hawthorn Press shares publishing interests and philosophies with both Gecko Press and Floris Books. The Press was founded in 1981, with its vision 'to contribute to a more creative, peaceful and sustainable world through... book publishing'.²⁰ Series

encompassing personal development, art and science, conflict and peace, social ecology, education (Waldorf and Steiner) are complemented by craft and family activity books as well as a small selection of Swedish children's picture books. Initially purchasing two *Findus* titles and Ulf Nilsson's *All the Dear Little Animals* from Gecko in 2008 and 2009, the publishing house now publishes its own editions of picture books by Sven Nordqvist and Ulf Nilsson as an innovative addition to their established backlists, although it is not known how extensively this area of activity will be developed in the future. Once again there is a direct personal connection with Sweden, with the publisher Martin Large's son Nathan based in Sweden as editor and translator and with good networks established for identifying Scandinavian titles of potential interest.²¹

Conclusion

This article has considered Floris Books' contribution to promoting Swedish children's literature to English-speaking audiences in the UK and abroad. The history and development of Swedish fiction and picture books for children have been surveyed, as well as the editorial and business challenges encountered in this niche market of the book trade. Finally, emerging competitors such as Gecko Press and Hawthorn Press have been reviewed, with considerable room for diversity and new approaches clearly evident and potentially exploitable within this specialist area of publishing.

It remains to be seen whether Floris Books will be able to sustain their current levels of success as in recent years, and whether they will be able to continue to source innovative and appealing authors who fit into their specific publishing ethos and philosophy. Given the lack of interest shown in translated children's fiction in general terms within the mainstream UK children's sector since the 1980s, there remains strong potential for further expansion into many language areas. As regards Floris Books and their vital role in promoting Swedish literature abroad, it is certainly to be hoped that they will continue to flourish for the next 35 years.

Endnotes

¹ www.florisbooks.co.uk/index.html Floris Books Home Page. Accessed: 8 Jul 2012

² www.florisbooks.co.uk/recruitment.html Floris Books Recruitment. Vacancy for Managing Editor (maternity cover). Accessed: 9 Jan 2012

³ Personal interview, Christian Maclean, 27 Feb 2012

⁴ www.discoverkelpies.co.uk Discover Kelpies and www.picturekelpies.co.uk Picture Kelpies. Accessed: 8 Jul 2012

⁵ This is reflected by the inclusion in the home page of Floris Books' website of links to their own detailed biographies and book information about their two best known picture book authors, Swedes Elsa Beskow and Astrid Lindgren. See <http://www.florisbooks.co.uk/elsabeskow.html> Elsa Beskow Picture Books and <http://www.florisbooks.co.uk/astridlindgren.html> Astrid Lindgren's life and work. Accessed: 8 Jul 2012

⁶ Although now out of print, the title was reissued in 2002 under the title *The Emperor's Vision and Other Christ Legends*, with illustrations by Ronald Heunick.

⁷ Personal interview, Christian Maclean, 27 Feb 2012

⁸ Ernest Benn was the British publisher of Tove Jansson's *Moomin* series from the 1950s and published a total of five Beskow titles between 1980 and 1988. Respected children's editor Alison Sage (who had previously edited *Moominvalley in November*) worked from literal translations provided by the Swedish publisher Bonniers in order to create an 'English version' (personal interview with Alison Sage, 9 Jul 2012).

⁹ Beskow's illustrations appear in a 1979 Dent edition of H C Andersen's tale *Thumbelina*.

¹⁰ Personal interview, Christian Maclean, 27 Feb 2012

¹¹ English translations of *Nils Holgerssons Underbara Resa* are examined in detail in C. Berry (2014).

¹² Polly Lawson has also edited three Floris books *Paintings from a bygone age* featuring the artwork of Swedish artist Carl Larsson during 2006-2008.

¹³ *Around the Year*, 1988; *Peter's Old House* (1990); *Woody, Hazel and Little Pip* (1990); *The Flowers' Festival* (1991 with Polly Lawson) and *Christopher's Harvest* (1992).

¹⁴ The increased production costs of the printing and production do inevitably push the price up, making these picture books relatively expensive. However, experiments to replace the cloth spine with a cheaper substitute were not well received by American customers.

¹⁵ This mini edition is available for the following titles: *Peter in Blueberry Land* (2005), *The Children of the Forest* (2005), *Pelle's New Suit* (2007), *The Sun Egg* (2007), *Around the Year* (2008), *Ollie's Ski Trip* (2008), *The Flowers' Festival* (2010) and *Woody, Hazel and Little Pip* (2010).

¹⁶ The dominance of English as a global language is also evident in the fact that the Swedish picture books are popular with Scandinavian ex-pats who wish their

grandchildren to be able to read the books of their childhood!

¹⁷ Personal telephone interview with Polly Nolan, 13 Jan 2012, and Liz Cross, 23 Apr 2012.

¹⁸ Gecko Press. (2010). *Gecko Press: Curiously Good Books from Around the World Print Catalogue*. Wellington: New Zealand: Gecko Press, p.3

¹⁹ This will be translated by Dan Bartlett, translator into English of the Norwegian crime writer Jo Nesbø. Email correspondence with Julia Marshall, 9 Jul 2012.

²⁰ www.hawthornpress.com/about Hawthorn Press - About. Accessed 9 Jan 2012

²¹ The shared interests of Hawthorn and Gecko in Sven Nordqvist's titles have resulted in different New Zealand and English translations of *When Findus was Little and Disappeared*, which is extremely unusual in the Anglophone market.

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