



The University of Melbourne

ASIALINK AT BEIJING INTERNATIONAL BOOK FAIR 2006

While publishing eyes are on October's Frankfurt Book Fair, several Australian publishers were recently focused on one of the fastest growing markets: China.

The Beijing International Book Fair 2006 enjoyed its largest ever international contingent with 1200 foreign publishers attending and local publishers noting an increased focus on rights.

Several Australian publishers were supported in their fair endeavours by working from the Australian joint stand, an initiative of Asialink and Austrade, Beijing. ALC's Rod Hare did a swift trade, noting interest "mostly in education and non fiction, but there is now some interest in picture books and early fiction".

Allen & Unwin rights associate Christen Cornell reported great interest in adult lifestyle and health titles, and noted that Chinese publishers didn't distinguish between commercial and literary fiction, rather looking for strong sales figures and rights deals in other markets.

Despite huge competition from other countries hoping to tap China's market of 1.3 billion potential readers, there exists strong interest in Australian books. Benython Oldfield is in China on an Asialink arts management residency and commented: "there is a great respect for Australia and Australian books but most Chinese publishers don't know how to find the right books or go about contacting Australian publishers to look for books that will appeal."

Ongoing engagement is vital to create a real presence for Australian books in this vibrant market. Austrade's Paul Sanda notes, "the opportunities and rewards are there for even the smaller houses and companies if they are persistent. Austrade looks forward to working with Asialink and other Australian companies next year to coordinate an expanded presence for Australia."

China is curious about Western literature, just as the West is growing curious about that from China, and it's exciting to be part of this exchange. Christen Cornell, Allen & Unwin



Christen Cornell, Allen & Unwin



Rod Hare, Nikki Anderson, Christen Cornell, & Benython Oldfield



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