



The Book Market in Germany for Canadian Publishers

Report of the Livres Canada Books and Canada
FBM2020 Trade Mission to Germany,
July 9–13, 2018

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Introduction

Germany has the largest economy in Europe and the continent's second largest population.¹ It is known as one of the most prosperous and stable European book markets and a key gateway for international publishers seeking to sell translation rights to the rest of Western Europe. Frankfurt, the country's financial centre, also hosts one of the world's largest and most influential international book fairs.

In July 2018, Livres Canada Books, in partnership with Canada FBM2020, hosted a trade mission to Germany. The goal of the mission was for Canadian publishers to learn about the German market, meet German counterparts, and gather information to help steer Livres Canada Books' and Canada FBM2020's programs and services in the lead-up to Canada's role as the Guest of Honour at the 2020 Frankfurt Book Fair.

The delegation consisted of 25 Canadian book publishing representatives who reflect the diversity of the book industry and are active in the German market. Accompanied by Livres Canada Books Executive Director, François Charette, and FBM2020 Executive Director, Gillian Fizet, delegates met with selected German publishers and potential partners in order to expand their understanding of this market.

Travelling in Berlin and Munich over July 9–13, 2018, the delegates attended presentations from various industry, national association, and government partner representatives from both Canada and Germany to enhance their knowledge of the different facets of the German publishing market. Delegates met with more than 100 publishers; visited bookstores, libraries and publishing houses; and held meetings with key German translators. They also visited the site of the Leipzig Book Fair, one of the oldest and most important book fairs in Germany. In addition, the delegation met with officials from the Embassy of Canada to Germany to discuss possible future support and to build upon the work and findings of the trade mission. The Embassy invited the German publishers who participated in the mission, acted as the point of contact between the Canadian and German participants, and organized the above mentioned activities. Thus, its efforts and involvement were instrumental to the success of the mission.

This report is a complement to the existing Livres Canada Books market guide, *Selling Canadian Books in Germany* (2015), the Mentoring Program on Germany (2017 and

¹ "The World Factbook. Europe: Germany." *The World Factbook* 2018–19. Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 2019. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gm.html>

2018), and the German mission briefing webinar held on January 22, 2019. More information on the German market and the 2020 Guest of Honour initiative can be found on the Canada FBM 2020 website. The goal of this report is to share experiences and information with publishers who did not take part in the mission. The report summarizes comments from members of the delegation and provides tips for Canadian publishers wishing to enter this market, key insights, and information on German book publishing, as well as examples of the kinds of business connections made and strengthened during the mission. Written shortly after their return from Germany and before the Frankfurt Book Fair in October of the same year, the publishers' individual reports provide snapshots of the German market and the knowledge they gathered while they were there. The delegates met with a variety of German publishers, and their observations about the German market reflect a range of tastes and interests. The market has continued to evolve since the writing of the individual reports, and a number of the delegates have continued to report more sales of German rights after their return from the mission.

Following the success of the trade mission to Germany, Canada FBM2020 and Livres Canada Books have collaborated again with the Embassy of Canada to Germany to organize a Canada Stand at the 2019 edition of the Leipzig Book Fair (March 21–24). The Leipzig Book Fair is the second largest German fair after the Frankfurt Book Fair and is an essential event for the book industry. Canada's attendance is especially important since the Leipzig Fair traditionally serves as a strategic location for the Frankfurt Guest of Honour to launch its literary programming. Moreover, attendance at Leipzig provides an ideal window for building on the knowledge and contacts gathered during the trade mission by learning more about the German market, the Guest of Honour program, making appropriate contacts, strengthening existing relationships, and discovering new business opportunities.

Summaries

Biblioasis – Dan Wells

My primary tip is to learn whatever you can about the market and who the players are, and what books have tended to work there before. Canadians often make the mistake of assuming that all markets are like the Canadian market: it's not always the books that work best in the Canadian market that will work best in others. There are many reasons for this, from demographic make-up and history to cultural protection policies. Honestly evaluate what on your list seems to fit with what Germans are selling. And modify your sales pitches accordingly. The Germans are open to a wider global market than many Canadians—or at least English Canadians—are aware of. It's going to be very competitive to get your books in front of them: they can hand-select the books that most interest them from around the world. It's going to take time, and the development of personal relationships, before you begin to see anything resembling a pay-off.

The good news is that Germans are open to translations and, in particular, to translations from English and French. A substantial part of their publishing programs, more than certainly is the case in the English and French reading worlds, are translation-based. So be persistent. But also realize that being Canadian, even in the lead-up to Frankfurt 2020, isn't much of a factor. This just increases the opportunity for discoverability. The books themselves have to be ones that will work in their market, and you've got a better chance of making the case if you know what works. Set up some appointments the next time you're in London or Frankfurt or elsewhere with some German publishers, not to sell them books, but to learn what it is they might be looking for. Think long and hard on that. These seeds will eventually bear some fruit.

Germans think that we still largely live among—if not in—trees. They seem unaware and largely uninterested in the fact that Canada is substantially an urban nation, dealing with the same problems of urban societies everywhere. And it seems that they don't, largely, want to be disabused of these illusions. Canada's value seems to be at the level of idea: this natural, civil, polite, undiscovered, and possibly both young and new (with the positive and negative connotations youth and newness might imply) pink-shaded spot on the map.

Part and parcel of this is that they don't know much about Canada at all. And they don't think of Canadian literature as anything worth mentioning: our major writers

are thought of primarily as either American or English. This presents both challenges and opportunities.

For Germans, Canadian literature is just part of English literature. Our writers, those that they know of, even the most Canadian among them—Margaret Atwood, Alice Munro, Michael Ondaatje—are not thought of as Canadian. We’re just largely understood as part of the larger English language market. It is harder to make the case that Atwood and Munro and Ondaatje are contributing something distinctly Canadian to the English language in a similar fashion. A lot of literary publishing is protected in Canada. On the international market in Germany, for it to find a foreign-language publisher, it really does have to compete more broadly with the best that exists everywhere.

Also, publishers are publishers everywhere. We’re all looking for the next discovery or new thing, however we define that. And this presents a great opportunity, because literature in Canada remains largely undiscovered in Germany, and the publishers we met with seemed very interested in learning more. I went into this trade mission with low sales expectations, as more-or-less a fact-finding mission. It has surpassed my expectations already in terms of sales potential and as a vehicle for making real connections.

We have done all of our follow-ups, and conversations have continued as a result. Most importantly, we have two German-language offers on the table within the first two weeks of returning from the mission: one for Kevin Hardcastle’s *In the Cage*, from Polar Verlag; and one for Kathy Page’s *Dear Evelyn*, from Verlag Kalus Wagenbach. The former offer is a direct result of the German speed-dating session in Berlin. The second was from a pitch originally made in Toronto during the International Festival of Author’s International Visitors sessions in October, but being able to follow up on it with the acquiring editor in Berlin while we were part of the mission, and being able to educate her on the extra translation and funding opportunities for Frankfurt 2020, played a central role in us being able to firm this up. We still remain hopeful that a few other books will sell before the year is out.

I’ve been thinking a lot about how best to represent Canada in 2020, and in further pitches to Germans (and others) leading up to this. It’s very difficult as there are so many different voices and interests to represent. I expect, the more that I think about it, it is next to impossible to please everyone. But my conversations with Germans about what they think of when they think of Canada makes it seem essential that we get this right.

Another publisher on the mission suggested the tagline Unapologetically Canadian, which is smart and humorous and plays on the idea that we’re this overly polite nation. I’ve been mulling over the idea that it should be something like We Are All Canadian. Outside of its close resemblance to a beer commercial—not entirely the wrong association, and perhaps a better foodstuff with which to impress Germans than maple syrup—it speaks to the one thing that binds Canada, and Canadian literature, together.

All it takes is a passport to begin to be part of the conversation. It's for this reason that so much of Canadian literature—or literature in Canada—deals with elsewhere: Asia, the US, Africa, Europe, Germany. It's why Rachel Cusk can be Canadian, or Eleanor Catton (or for that matter Mavis Gallant, because it goes both ways, with citizenship being the only requirement) and we can embrace all of them as such. Everyone is a potential Canadian, and in that way literature in Canada can speak to the world in a way that the literatures of other places—including perhaps especially other predominantly English-language nations—cannot. This makes it difficult to determine what CanLit is, of course: it's Rohinton Mistry as much as it's Alice Munro as much as it's Cherie Dimaline. But that's okay, and by acknowledging it we make our weakness our strength. Which is, aesthetically, artistically, demographically, geographically, our diversity.

I'm certain that this has been thought through by others more attuned to the nuances of the situation than I am, and there's no doubt that I don't understand the myriad contexts and considerations that go into running something like this, and to putting on a Guest of Honour program. But I hope some of this might be useful.

I'm greatly honoured and pleased to have been able to be part of this mission. It was lovely getting to know Gillian, François, Jennifer, and the rest of my peers. So much good has already come out of the conversations with my fellow Canadians—an unmentioned benefit of trips such as this!—that the sales to follow seem a mere bonus. My thanks to all involved.

Book*hug – Hazel Millar

Canadians considering the German book market will be thrilled to know that Germany is a country of readers. There are approximately 6,000 bookstores in Germany and nearly 3,000 publishers. It is especially important to know that German publishers take the annual Guest of Honour role at the Frankfurt Book Fair very seriously. Being selected as the Guest of Honour at the Frankfurt Book Fair puts the chosen country in the spotlight, which, in turn, helps lead to increased opportunities for rights sales as well as an increased level of international interest in that country's publishing industry. In the lead up to 2020, when Canada will be Guest of Honour, I believe that Canadian publishers have a golden opportunity to export books into the German book market.

I am struck by how much German publishers romanticize Canada. They seem particularly interested in Canadian books about nature and the environment as well as very literary books with high calibre writing. While I worry a bit that German publishers may have a misunderstanding of Canada's vast land mass (i.e., many spoke of Canada as being vast, untouched, largely unexplored, and never-before inhabited à la Group of Seven painting), I believe it is incumbent upon us as publishers, operating during this time of post-Canada 150 and post-TRC (Truth and Reconciliation Commission), to break down this inaccurate stereotype of Canada, especially as we, as a country, attempt to come to terms with Canada's shameful colonial past and treatment of Indigenous

peoples. As publishers, we have an important opportunity to present an accurate representation of Canada on the world stage in 2020.

Canadian publishing has made some important attempts to publish books by more diverse and historically underrepresented voices in the last few years. While the industry still has a long way to go, I believe this is something that publishers should highlight when considering exporting books to the German market.

Most importantly, I learned that Germany is a country of readers who highly respect and value art, culture, and the written word. During the trade mission, I spent a lot of time wondering where this deep respect for books comes from. On one hand, I believe it must come from the fact that during WWII, Germans, like so many other Europeans, saw books banned and burned publicly. Thankfully, I cannot imagine what it must be like to have books taken away from me, or to see art destroyed in this brutal way. On another hand, German readers seem to intrinsically understand that buying and reading books means that one is investing in, and participating in, art and culture. Sadly, in Canada, many readers are taught by companies like Amazon that the best price to pay is the lowest price, which puts books on par with any other everyday retail item, including kitchen gadgets or clothing. This has the effect of totally devaluing books as art objects. Buying and reading books should instead be encouraged to be thought of as participating in, and investing in, art and culture. While a company like Amazon certainly has a presence in Germany (there seems to be no escaping it anywhere), I'm awed by the fact that German readers have such deep respect for the written word and that bookstores are community and cultural havens.

I learned a lot of important things about the German market. I am absolutely charmed by the idea of the "just in time" delivery option that sees book delivery trucks driving around Germany overnight, not to mention the drivers who personally leave books inside of stores, thanks to the keys they have that permit them entry. But most importantly, I learned about the fixed pricing system that allows bookstores, independents, and chains to compete equally. This means that when a customer buys a book, they will pay the same price regardless of where they buy it from. Strict competition rules between stores are in effect and so it is no surprise that independent bookstore culture thrives in Germany. The fixed pricing system has been in effect in Germany since 1888 and has the full support of German politicians. Publishers set the prices of books and the fixed pricing system is in effect all the way down the industry chain, including for wholesalers, fulfillment centres, retail stores, etc.

I have sent follow-up emails to every publisher that I met with in both Munich and Berlin. During each meeting, I was careful to make note of any and all titles that a publisher expressed an interest in receiving. During my follow up correspondence, I sent electronic PDFs of the books along with any relevant promotional materials and press coverage. I also reminded each publisher of the special translation grant available to apply for from the Canada Council for the Arts and included a link to the application page.

Additionally, I requested a follow-up meeting in Frankfurt. At the time of writing, I have secured seven meetings in Frankfurt with German publishers that I met with during the trade mission. It is a definite goal to sell rights into Germany.

Prior to the German trade mission, we at Book*hug had sold one book into Germany: *Nilfing* by Lisa Robertson. We sold it to a small philosophical literary press called Verlag Turia + Kant, which has offices in both Berlin and Austria. We have received interest from German publishers for several other titles, most notably *Notes from a Feminist Killjoy* by Erin Wunker, *Blood Fable* by Oisin Curran, and *Rich and Poor* by Jacob Wren. I am very hopeful that we will sell additional titles into Germany in the lead up to FBM2020.

Caitlin Press – Vici Johnstone

The German publishers were very interested in thought-provoking stories that push the boundaries and margins of literature and social norms. They were quite interested in our Dagger Editions list (stories by and about queer women) and loved books like *What the Mouth Wants* by Monica Meneghetti, a literary memoir by a bisexual, polyamorous woman struggling with her strict Italian Catholic upbringing. I also had a lot of interest in *Imprint*, which is a book about intergenerational trauma by a rural BC artist who is a third-generation Holocaust survivor. The German publishers also really liked books that addressed environmental and agricultural issues and seemed very interested in stories about people living close to the land, such as *Wild Fierce Life* and *Becoming Wild*, which are both non-fiction stories by women who live on the west coast of BC. Both authors speak deeply about their connection to the natural world in which they live in and the challenges (and dangers) they face on a daily basis.

Surprisingly, the German publishers were not interested in our Indigenous stories. As one publisher explained to me, they have their own history and indigeneity to deal with. That said, I pitched a few books of fiction that centre closely around our BC history and the relationship between non-indigenous settlers and the indigenous population and surprisingly I had some requests for submission. They were also not interested in anything that seemed too “Wild West,” but they do have a strong connection to “all things nature.” I had a lot of interest in our poetry collection, *Refugium*, a collection of poems about saving the Pacific Ocean.

It was interesting to hear that we have a reputation for, or a leaning towards happy endings. The German readers and literary community seem to find this disingenuous. But it was equally interesting to hear that our literary communities are closely aligned in many ways, in that Canadian and German writers explore subject matter that can be uncomfortable and yet thought provoking.

I was very pleasantly surprised to learn that the German publishers are interested in small press publications. In truth, I was sure that the speed dating would be a bit lonely for a small regional press from BC, but in fact I was so busy with meetings that I had

no breaks in either session. I received requests for close to one hundred PDFs for a wide variety of books. I think this speaks to the idea that German publishers are looking for unique Canadian stories and voices.

I publish very niche books in that our mandate is to predominantly represent BC women, their lives, and their stories. I have always assumed that for books to be of interest in an international market they should have an international theme, but in speaking with the German publishers and listening to the various presentations, I learned not to underestimate the global interest in our Canadian/BC stories.

I was also very impressed by the research that most of the German publishers had done prior to meeting us. In many cases, the publisher was familiar with our list and directed me to specific subjects. It was clear that German readers are educated, discerning, and largely interested in cultures outside their own. I was also very impressed by the structure of their industry and the support they have from the government in maintaining value for the book industry. Their fixed discount and direct (next day) delivery system is both admirable and enviable. The German publishing infrastructure has created a market that is sustainable for all contributors, from the author to the bookstore to the distributor and publisher. Such a system creates a wealth of accessible and diverse literature.

We have received one submission for a book surprisingly close to our mandate. The story is about a woman who lived for seven decades alone in the bush. This book has already been loosely translated into English and looks like an excellent fit for Caitlin Press. I have an editor reading the manuscript now and we hope to contact the publisher in September 2018. We have two more coming and we have started sending out PDFs as requested.

I was pleasantly surprised by the interest in our work, and the books that were offered to us for translation by the German publishers. Prior to the trade mission, I was worried that our books would not be relevant to German readers and vice-versa. But all the German publishers I met seemed pretty confident that we are publishing similar work. They were interested and enthusiastic.

I must also comment about the incredible knowledge I gained by travelling with my Canadian colleagues, many of whom have been previously successful at buying and selling rights outside of Canada. All the publishers were open and willing to share advice and insights on how to focus my rights program and improve my export process.

Coach House Books – Alana Wilcox

German publishers and readers are very sophisticated and are looking not only for books with a good story, but also those with a more intellectual component. There are so many publishers, each with their own niches, that it's important to do considerable research ahead of time. They all read English, meaning they have easy access to our

books, but also to books from all over the world, since English is the lingua franca of publishing. This means there's a lot of competition.

I knew the German book market was robust and healthy compared to ours, but I hadn't realized exactly how huge and relatively successful it is. I hadn't realized there might be a market there for our experimental work and for our poetry, but there were some publishers interested.

The most important thing I learned is that there's still a huge market for very serious non-fiction titles, and for more intellectual and academic work. And that there's a flourishing smaller-press community where some of our titles might find a home.

Following the mission, I've sent out PDFs of the books we discussed to all the publishers I met with. Some have already declined books, but most haven't answered or have said they're reading them. We'll see! And I have some books from Germany to consider as well.

I've already arranged to meet two of the publishers again this year in Frankfurt and will definitely arrange to meet many of them in London or at a subsequent Frankfurt Book Fair.

Comme des géants – Nadine Robert

The German publishers we met with seemed more interested in the content of our books rather than in the numbers. Strong subjects and themes, captivating stories and narration, and literary quality generated more interest than sales figures. It is important to be familiar with the publishing houses' catalogues so the titles presented are targeted and correspond to the German publishers' expectations.

In terms of children's books specifically, the German market seems more conservative with respect to the artwork and graphics. A few publishers in Berlin and Munich showed greater openness in their graphic choices but generally the more accessible illustrations had more appeal.

The most interesting thing I noticed during the mission was that with the advent of Frankfurt 2020, there is a genuine desire in both countries to learn more about our respective literatures and markets. Frankfurt 2020 is the engine or spark for a mutual literary curiosity between Canada and Germany. The event itself succeeds in creating a cultural bridge. Thus the mission objective has been achieved. What remains to be seen is whether this interest is lasting or short term (2018–2020).

Although I was already aware that the German market is one of the three most important European markets, along with the United Kingdom and France, I was impressed by the efficiency of their distribution network and the efforts being made to counter online sales on Amazon, among other things. It is a fairly protectionist market. Stakeholders in

the book industry seem to have acted quickly in the face of multinationals Amazon and Google in order to protect the book market in German-speaking countries.

The speed-dating activity did not allow for the presentation of many titles; some publishers wanted to see other titles from Comme des géants' catalogue, as well as new titles to be presented at Frankfurt. My agents, who represent both Comme des géants and Le Lièvre de Mars, have already received meeting requests for the 2018 Frankfurt Book Fair. Even before the end of the mission, my agents had sent PDFs of a number of titles to interested publishers. We will be following up on this interest over the coming weeks.

Most of the publishers that showed interest in Comme des géants' catalogue were already known to the publishing house, reflecting our participation in international fairs like Frankfurt and Bologna. The difficulty with a mission of this kind is that it can be hard to reach small independent publishers or new publishing houses that do not yet attend these fairs and that are emerging players. Sometimes they are important players whose interests may dovetail with those of small Canadian publishing houses that have similar structures. It is also important not to forget the prestigious Swiss German publishing houses that are very well distributed in the German market and in the other German-speaking countries. I know that they were invited, but perhaps the distance discouraged them from participating.

The mission was an absolute success on all points; the selection of places we visited, presentations, and people we met with were equally interesting and greatly enriching!

ECW Press – David Caron

I have three tips for Canadians considering the German market:

1. Since Germany has a strong English-language book marketplace, figure out your means of distribution into Germany. A good US or UK distributor will have a sales team working in Germany. If you have that, clearly identify your top prospects each season for Germany, and develop a specific sales sheet for those international sales reps. The sales sheet could focus on the German market, or the European market in general, depending on the title. Make time to talk with your international sales team about your approach. This specific work will pay off in increased sales of finished books into Germany.
2. The classic: Research and identify potential German publishers for your books and invite them to meetings at London or Frankfurt (or via email, if doing all at home). If you don't know where to start, ask other Canadian publishers who have been working with German publishers already to recommend three publishers with whom to start conversations. German publishers love long-term relationships, and this strategy could lead to rights sales of several titles.
3. Another classic: Find a German agent. If you don't know where to start, look around at Canadian publishers like you, and see who their German agent is. German publishers can be sticklers about process, and having a German agent can really help

with getting statements and royalty payments, and dealing with German withholding taxes and forms. Not to mention that a good German agent will champion books they really like and will also know the scouts that certain publishers trust.

The most interesting thing about the mission was learning that German readers, as a market, love to learn about the world outside their borders, more so than most cultures. So German publishers feed that interest by publishing many translations that can sell very well! And the Guest of Honour (GoH) program feeds that interest too by focusing attention on a particular country each year. I learned how much media attention is paid to the GoH country in advance of the fair, how GoH authors travel the country in the months leading up to the fair, and how much bookstores stock books accordingly. This creates a halo effect in advance of the fair, starting now, and an echo effect after the fair. We'll see how long that lasts, and how much of a lasting effect the relationship building has.

The most important thing I learned was the size of the market: over €9 billion in sales, about three times larger per capita than Canada, strengthened by a fixed-price policy. Because of this, the imprints at the three conglomerates (Holtzbrinck, RH, Bonnier) seem healthy, as do the “independents.” I found editors at all of these companies to be very welcoming, and easily agreed to meetings at their offices. There were renovations going on at three of my visits, a healthy sign! That made me much more eager to set up meetings, knowing that they are as interested in meeting us as we are about meeting them. It adds confidence!

We have, of course, followed up with multiple submissions for every publisher with whom we met. We have also asked to see which top-prospect publishers want to meet again at Frankfurt. Hopefully, they will have read some of our books. If not, we will follow up later in the fall, and continue to build relationships with these houses.

We have a book out this season with Suhrkamp (*Shoot Out*) and will continue the relationship with that editor. We have another book coming out with DTV (*No Good Asking*) and will continue that dialogue as well. And just after the mission, we got another book deal with btb, which will be looked after by the author's agent at Cooke International.

Don't forget that the German-language market goes beyond the German border. Our German agent is in Switzerland, and we have two recent German books with Austrian publishers. One is out now (*Overqualified* with Luftschacht) and one is due out in 2019 (*Rights of Nature* with Benevento). Ignoring such potential partners would be as bad as a foreign publisher only looking at American publishers and ignoring the Canadian ones!

Also, don't forget to ask your authors what languages they speak! Those who can speak German obviously have a big advantage.

Éditions de La Pastèque – Frédéric Gauthier

My most important advice would be to visit and meet with the German publishers in their cities. That seems obvious, in light of this trip, and it is clear that openness exists outside the context of exhibitions and fairs. We were able to benefit from superb organization for arranging these meetings, but this remains an initiative to be repeated and fundamental advice for those who want to invest in this direction. It is a very closed market, so you have to go and meet them in their own environment.

The most interesting thing that I learned during this mission is the love that the Germans have for literature and especially public readings. We had the opportunity to visit a lovely literaturhaus (literature house), which was very inspiring. In addition, I discovered two wonderful children's bookstores in Berlin—Totem and Mondo Azul—that both carry Francophone children's titles and comics, and both places also have exhibitions, which gives us good ideas for 2020.

The German market for children's literature is very conservative, especially in terms of illustration styles. They are entrenched in old fashioned and outdated styles. Nevertheless, one can sense a new generation of publishers and a certain feeling of openness towards more modern styles and a more contemporary approach to children's books. In addition, the German market for comics is in decline and the opportunities are very slim.

We are in the process of developing relationships with a few publishers for 2020. We have established a very good relationship with a small emerging publisher, Rotopol. The program for translation and production assistance is a significant help and will make a difference in our negotiations. Beyond the release of a few translations, we are organizing projects involving exhibitions, workshops, and launches—in short, these will be two busy years for us in Germany.

Éditions les Malins – Margot Cittone

To learn about the German market:

- Regularly check the bestseller lists (such as those of Spiegel and Lovelybooks, for example).
- Browse the Instagram pages of German publishing houses. They have a strong presence. Searching by hashtag (even in German) quickly provides a good sense of what is being published in a given market segment.
- Go through the translators who work with German publishing houses since they are often carefully listened to and regularly act as agents for the books they like.
- Do not hesitate to promote titles that have a Canadian “voice,” even if they depart from the major trends. Guest of Honour status seems to afford this opportunity, since the German publishers are also looking for titles that reflect the identity of the country being honoured.

- Always remember the assistance offered by the Canadian government for translation.
- For Francophone publishers, have extracts of the first chapters in English since there are not too many German editors who can also read French.

Canada is a much-anticipated Guest of Honour and German publishers are very interested in discovering Canadian literature.

There is a single association that simultaneously represents the interests of German publishers, booksellers, and certain stakeholders in mass distribution and the media. Comprising approximately 5,000 members, the Börsenverein safeguards the rules of healthy competition with the aim of benefiting the entire book supply chain while actively promoting reading to the public. It is a very interesting model!

I arranged meetings at the Frankfurt Book Fair with nine to sixteen publishers that I met during the mission. I expect that I will meet others during the next Bologna Children's Book Fair as well. A number of the publishers I met with on the trade mission also pointed me to other publishing houses, which enabled me to expand my list of contacts in Germany.

I met with an editor at Random House with whom I had already had good contacts. I was able to visit their offices, which was very interesting and helpful for expanding our relationship.

The first volume in our series “*La vie compliquée de Léa Olivier*” will be published in Germany in fall 2018. Volume 2 is scheduled for spring 2019. We sold the rights during the last Bologna Children's Book Fair.

Éditions Québec Amérique – Alexandra Valiquette

Translators are valuable allies. If they adopt a title or an author from your publishing house, they will be inclined to talk about it to the publishers with whom they work, thus substantially increasing the chances of seeing the book published in German. Certain translators are even open to translating an extract, which is helpful when approaching publishers.

We often forget this, but the “German market” also includes German-speaking Switzerland and Austria.

In the youth category, light-hearted books and series seemed to appeal more to Germans than heavier subjects.

I was surprised to see the important role that translators play in Germany. They practically act as agents and even as ambassadors for the book once it is published, and it is not unusual for them to be involved in the promotion.

Moreover, the remarks by translator Frank Heibert were among the highlights of the week. His impressions about which aspects of Canadian literature were most likely to interest the German readership steered us well in terms of the approach to take. A report of his conclusions was published on the FBM2020 blog: <https://canadafbm2020.com/blogs/blog/frank-heibert-the-quality-approach>.

The unity formed by all the links in the book supply chain shows how well-oiled this machine is. Their system of distribution in under 24 hours is also highly enviable! The association represents the whole industry: publishers, booksellers, and distributors. It acts as a lobbyist with the German government and the European Union and represents both economic and cultural components of the book.

I have remained in contact with many publishing houses, revisited a number of contacts during the Frankfurt Book Fair, and will revisit others during the Salon du livre de Montréal through the Fellowship program at Rendez-vous, organized by Québec Édition. I intend to continue to nurture these relationships. A number of our titles are still being evaluated by the publishers, following the trade mission in July.

Self-publishing seems to worry a number of German publishers. Readers seem increasingly to be turning to these low priced (and often poor quality) books and abandoning the traditional chain. This part of the market is difficult to quantify.

Fernwood Publishing – James Patterson

Tips for Canadians considering this market:

- In terms of non-fiction, particularly related to contexts of social science and politics, I found the interest by the German publishers I met focused heavily on critical and philosophical theory.
- Find translators and engage with them as much as with publishers, they're looking for work, so they will help connect you with the right publishers and create better leads.
- Though it's not always the case, I do think that Canadian publishers have a mistaken idea about the level of interest in Indigenous titles and perspectives. The Karl May series and the exuberant subcultural interest by small groups of Germans in a folkloric idea of indigeneity are not a thing of mass market appeal. I do think those ideas are going to be a part of the books that Germans will translate, but there needs to be more effort made to connect the books to them than that.
- The German publishers I met with really had an interest in nature, wilderness, and the environment. It's something that might be overlooked a bit by Canadian publishers, but something incredibly important to German culture and part of the reason why they are so interested in Canada.
- Go to the Frankfurt Book Fair and take time to walk through the German pavilions and just introduce yourself. They all are there and want to meet you. The spring

Leipzig Book Fair sets the stage for the promotion of books for the Guest of Honour country at the Frankfurt Book Fair.

Broadly speaking, understanding the vast size and scope of the German publishing market was an eye-opening experience. The level of cultural programming around the fair and the general public's reading habits (the size of the market is huge), is very heartening for someone in an industry believed to be in decline in Canada.

Though the Munich and Berlin segments of the trips provided a very quick immersion into the German book publishing market, in conversation, German publishers noted that the publishing scenes in those cities were not particularly robust (though there certainly were some big publishing houses at the organized events). For this reason, the most important thing I learned was that I was just dipping my toes in the water. There is plenty more work to be done in terms of cultivating the relationships made with publishers during the trade mission, but it is also important to use the mission as a springboard to keep broadening that contact base.

The most important thing I learned about the German market itself is that the level of support for cultural programming and author touring is quite astounding. These are symptoms, perhaps, of the higher population in a smaller geographic region, stronger interest in books in the market, and greater investment in ensuring the industry is protected. There are important lessons to be learned by Canada from the way Germany runs things, such as the strength of the single, fixed price model in the German market to maintain the independent bookstore scene.

I also learned about the importance of the spring Leipzig Book Fair in setting the stage for the promotion of books for the Guest of Honour country at the Frankfurt Book Fair.

We have sold one book to a German publisher since the mission and have encouraged that publisher to seek Canada Council for the Arts support for its translation. I am in negotiations with a few other publishers for other titles as well.

The mission also allowed me to meet with a couple of publishers and translators who were not able to attend the formal meetings. I really found these meetings to be influential in broadening the scope of my contact network in Germany. From those conversations, I made a number of other meetings with German publishers that I had not met.

One thing that I have found difficult is developing the infrastructure to have German books reviewed for possible English translation. Obviously, these meetings are a bit of give and take, so making sure Fernwood has the ability to reciprocate, when interest warrants, is something we need to address internally.

Great Plains Publications – Mel Marginet

The German market is excellent for Canadians because most editors can read English and French (often both). I found that my pitches for books that were quite specific in terms of plot and the audience for the book went over well. For fiction, I found the German publishers had different sensibilities between Munich and Berlin. In Munich, I found the houses a bit more relaxed, whereas Berlin publishers wanted very specific stories to fit their more focused lists.

I loved learning about the structure of the German book industry and how the publishers, booksellers, and distributors worked under one organization. We waste too much time and too many resources in Canada working in silos. We need to work together to our mutual benefit. I sit on the executive for the Association of Manitoba Book Publishers and have many ideas to bring back to my home province.

Putting faces to names was key, as well as learning the types of books that publishers in this market will buy. We will still have a regional focus to our non-fiction, but keeping an eye open for books that will travel into the German market will influence our future lists.

Most publishers I met with were interested in seeing one or more titles in PDF format. We have been in touch with all of those houses to send additional materials. I'll be following up again at the end of August once summer vacations are over, to remind my contacts about the Frankfurt 2020 translation funding that will also assist them with production and publicity.

A bonus for me from this mission was meeting more Québec-based publishers. We'd been talking about how to find French Canadian titles to translate and bring to the English market (and the possibility of having some of our books translated into French and sold to Québec publishing houses). This mission was fantastic as I met so many great people. I've been in further contact with many Québec houses and hopefully we can make scouting Québec titles part of our Great Plains program in future seasons.

Overall, this was a fantastic experience. We're in the process of a succession plan here at Great Plains, so Catharina and I are keen to see our titles travel outside of Canada. Being able to meet and learn from such a variety of Canadian publishers was fabulous. Thank you!

Groupe HMH – Arnaud Foulon

The German market is very important given the number of active publishers and the quantity of books published every year. As attractive as it may be though, it involves lengthy preparation before the meetings. The two things that I would recommend to Canadians considering this market are as follows:

1. A presence at the major international fairs, especially the Frankfurt Book Fair

2. A careful and detailed study of the catalogues of the German publishing houses that you would like to work with

Conducting business with a German publishing house often requires several meetings/years in order to establish a relationship of trust and a mutual understanding of each other's catalogues.

The most interesting part of the trade mission was meeting a number of new publishing houses, both independent and affiliated (an important part of the publishing market in Germany), and seeing their interest in Canadian books.

In addition, the meeting in Berlin with translator Frank Heibert was very important and useful for providing the translator's perspective on German publishing². Translators play a critical role in German publishing and I would recommend that Canadian publishers take the time to talk with a number of them since each one has privileged contacts with German publishers. Their opinions are listened to and thus are deserving of particular attention.

The most interesting thing that I learned about the German market is their openness to doing business with foreign partners. Specifically, the publishing houses we met with, from smallest to largest, have all dedicated a significant part of their catalogues dedicated to foreign literature. German publishing houses publish many foreign authors, mostly English-language (approximately 60%) followed by French-language (10%). Almost all publishers have editors responsible for discovering foreign authors for their catalogues, mainly in the adult literary fiction genre, the area in which the German publishers we met with seemed most interested.

Our group has been doing business with a few German literary publishers for five or six years. The mission made it possible to strengthen certain ties and above all to establish new ones with publishing houses that I did not know. Since mid-July, we have sent titles and media kits to approximately 20 publishers who are currently evaluating them. We are in weekly contact with one or another of them to follow up and we realistically hope that this mission will make it possible for us to sign a few agreements by the end of 2018. To that end, we have already arranged to meet again with certain publishers during the 2018 Frankfurt Book Fair in order to continue the discussions.

In concluding, allow me to emphasize the work done by Canada FBM2020 and Livres Canada Books to arrange this trade mission. Their outstanding organization made it possible to meet with a large number of German publishers. Thank you and bravo to all the people in both organizations who worked towards the success of this mission.

² A condensed version of his speech is available on the Canada FBM2020 website: <https://canadafbm2020.com/blogs/blog-frank-heibert-the-quality-approach>

Groupe Homme – Florence Bisch

In Germany, Canada enjoys a very positive image, that of a tolerant country with a successful economic and social model! These meetings showed how curious and enthusiastic the German publishers were about discovering new voices, and different and innovative ways of seeing. We should therefore not hesitate to offer them bold and eclectic proposals!

In addition, Germans remain very Francophile, and the Guest of Honour program will be an opportunity to introduce them to other Francophone voices that they will be interested to discover. The recent success of authors such as Kim Thuy and Jocelyne Saucier has led the way!

I gained a better understanding of the importance that the Guest of Honour invitation to the Frankfurt Book Fair has for the German market. It is really an opportunity for publishers and booksellers to showcase a country through its literature and many events punctuate the whole year. The Leipzig Book Fair in particular is the kick-off for a year of celebrations, with many events that enliven the whole city, not only at the fair venue but in the cafés, in the churches, and in unlikely and original places!

The Guest of Honour program is an opportunity for our publishing house to promote especially our fiction authors who will be the most anticipated and the best showcased during these events. With this in mind, we have been able to make new contacts.

It was very interesting to get German perspectives on what they perceive to be the reality of Canada and Quebec. According to a translator that we met with, Germans are interested in Canadian nature and viewpoints, as well as in issues of immigration and integration, which resonate with their own reality.

On the other hand, they have a different sensibility with respect to the pervasive happy endings of North American novels (!), as well as a different assessment of what they often consider to be endless explanations.

With their literature houses and all the readings and events organized throughout the year, Germany can truly boast that it is a country of book-lovers offering a multitude of original ways to share this passion.

Invisible Publishing – Leigh Nash

Despite repeatedly hearing about the marked drop in readers in Germany, it seems that the German market is still quite robust compared to the Canadian market. There are still a healthy number of publishers and bookshops trying to innovate to reach new readers all the time—much as publishers must do at home. There is strong interest in Canadian literature, in new voices (despite repeated mentions of old favourites like

Atwood, Munro, and Ondaatje), and in immigrant stories. Publishers are looking for fiction and non-fiction, but not essay collections.

Like everyone else on the trade mission, I found the Canadian stereotypes most fascinating to try to understand: that Germans view Canada as this great, untamed wilderness. But I also found it heartening that they value our openness and our diversity, that we're perceived not to be a "melting pot" like the US but a country that values difference. The book supply chain discussions were also interesting. We do have regional wholesalers in Canada who can deliver books overnight, but that's certainly not possible with cross-country shipments. Nor does it have the same charm as book delivery people who let themselves into the stores to drop off books.

Small German publishers (10–12 books per year) have been able to build really robust translation programs in a way we haven't been able to in Canada. I'm assuming that this is in part due to close proximity to many other countries (so, geography) but also because of their close proximity to the Frankfurt Book Fair. That's probably the most marked difference I learned of between small-press publishing in Canada and its German counterparts.

The most important thing I learned about the market was not to make assumptions about what publishers of a certain size/scale might want. Not to make assumptions for the whole country based on meetings in one city. I found the appetites of the publishers to be very different between Munich and Berlin, for example. In Munich, I found my conversations were much more closely aligned with the stereotypes of Canada that we discussed as a group—publishers wanted to hear about nature and landscape and how that tied into a book's themes. In Berlin, publishers asked for more experimental books, more diverse authors and stories, and really didn't seem as interested in our more landscape-oriented titles.

I've followed up with each publisher I met during the speed dating in Berlin and Munich. I've scheduled six follow-up appointments so far at the Frankfurt Book Fair. And I've been in touch with one publisher about purchasing rights as well.

I am already looking forward to attending Frankfurt 2018 in order to build on the relationships established as part of this trade mission, and I'm grateful for the financial support provided by Canada FBM2020 to attend.

There seems to be good appetite on behalf of the German market for Canadian books, which bodes well for 2020. I am interested in learning more about distributing finished books into Germany and was disappointed that I had a conflict with the webinar on the German market. Overall, I think it will be important to showcase the diversity of Canadian publishing (and Canada as a whole, really) in terms of planning for 2020 events, including highlighting our Indigenous and immigrant experiences.

Kids Can Press – Adrienne Tang

The German market provides a great opportunity for Canadians looking to sell rights, and with the translation/production/promotion grants offered ahead of FBM2020, this is a fantastic time to take advantage of this opportunity.

With so many German publishers out there, the chances are high that you will be able to find like-minded German publishers who have similar taste or styles as your house. Focus on finding compatible publishers, rather than simply meeting with as many as possible—there are a lot out there!

This tip isn't just for the German market: it's important to determine what the publisher is looking for (ask questions!) and really listen to why they say no, or why they are interested in something. These clues will help you zero in on the right title for that publisher.

German translators actually play an important role in the sale and promotion of a translated title. They can be a champion for a title that they love by speaking highly of it to their editors. For readings and book tours, translators can draw as large a crowd with German readers as the original author. They are promoted on book covers and are quite respected. A translated title isn't a negative thing, or something hidden in German editions.

Regional content, unique topics, ambiguous endings work well on the adult side. Highlight these aspects. Consider giving publishers the option to make small changes to the content, if the author is on board and it is a deal breaker.

On the children's side, publishers are a bit more risk-averse. Art style is more classic, less contemporary, though there are exceptions.

I have followed up with all of the publishers that I met with in Munich and Berlin, and have arranged meetings in Frankfurt with several of them. Prior to the mission, I had confirmed deals for a board book with arsEdition, a YA title with HarperCollins Germany, and a picture book with Carl Auer. During the trip, I confirmed an ongoing negotiation for a picture book with Jacoby & Stuart, and just this week received an offer for a YA title—I am following up with other publishers to see if I get multiple offers.

Building a relationship with German editors and publishing houses is important. I have been meeting with an editor at a big German publishing house for over four years, and she's only just submitted an offer for rights for a YA title (our first potential rights deal). Sometimes it takes a long time, but over the years we've become friends and I now have a good sense of what she is looking for. I find the German market to be a long-game.

Thanks for the support! The mission was a great success for me, and I think others on the trip. Looking forward to the following months to see how much more might come from this trip.

Leméac Éditeur – Jean-Marie Jot

The German market is one of the most dynamic in the world, both in terms of its qualitatively and quantitatively impressive production and its large, interested, and motivated readership. The experience acquired through visiting the German publishing community, not only during the course of this mission but over a number of years, brings out the following points:

- Know who you are addressing: It is essential to be properly informed about the publishing house with which you wish to establish ties. Are the editorial line and sensibilities similar or at least compatible? In terms of its catalogue, how open to the literature of other countries has this publishing house already shown itself to be? How well would a title from your own catalogue fit in the targeted publisher's catalogue?
- Know what to offer and choose well from your catalogue: While for each publisher their whole catalogue has a fundamental value, this will not necessarily be the case for the German market, and it is important to simply select a few titles that you can present properly to the publishers you contact rather than show too much and risk overwhelming them. The choice of subject, style, purpose, and sometimes the length of the text can tip the balance and even surprise. In any case, brevity and clarity are in order. At the risk of evoking the stereotype of German efficiency, experience shows that there is a bit of truth in it.
- Do not hesitate to make more contacts: It may seem obvious, but the more doors you can open, the better.
- Focus on the long term: It is rare for a contact to be immediately productive. That being said, once established, the relationship can bear fruit several months or even several years later and it is essential to maintain it over the course of time.

What emerges very clearly from the various meetings held during our trade mission is that it is possible to combine industry and culture for the better, the former through its vitality and its scope guaranteeing the latter. The concerns of the publishing community in Germany are representative of the seriousness with which all cultural activities are considered, which is to say, never lightly, with sufficient resources, and with the desire to ensure their sustainability.

The German market is certainly dynamic, thanks to a large pool of readers, but also because it knows itself well, and maintains its perspective on its goals and the means of achieving them. The key point is that this market is very open and welcoming, but nevertheless selective in certain respects. The success of certain texts in Canada will not necessarily guarantee success in Germany, and sometimes not even simple interest, which can be surprising and unsettling. Hence the importance of carefully selecting the titles to be offered.

All of the contacts made are being carefully followed up and a few of the publishers that we met with during this mission have expressed interest in various titles. We look forward to closer German ties.

Lux Éditeur – Alexandre Sanchez

To present their books to German publishers, Canadian publishers must pay particular attention to the exportability of the titles that they choose to promote. The “national” or Canadian aspect of the book is an asset, but above all the book must be understandable by someone who is not familiar with Canada. Choose titles that describe universal realities, in a Canadian context, since Canadian realities are sometimes difficult to grasp.

German publishers are like all publishers when it comes to buying rights and financial risk; above all, they want a book that sells. The titles that we offer them should therefore be good sellers in Québec, but we have to show that they can sell in a context other than Canada.

Regarding the trade mission, I can confirm that FBM2020 was supervised by qualified and passionate people. I am certain that the outcome will reflect this professionalism and enthusiasm.

I was particularly impressed by the vitality of the book market in Germany. The sales figures, the number of publishers, the wonderful literaturhaus (literature houses), and the association that brings together publishers, booksellers, and distributors.

I have not yet concluded an agreement with a German publisher to sell or buy rights, but I am optimistic that I will do so. I have sent out a large number of PDFs, but evaluating texts takes longer than one month, especially in the summer!

I have approximately ten meetings with German publishers arranged for the 2018 Frankfurt Book Fair. I hope that it will be an opportunity to finalize an agreement or two with them.

Nimbus Publishing – Emily MacKinnon

Some tips for Canadians considering this market:

- Remove explicitly Canadian copy from the book’s description and tag-lines. For example, “the tiny town of Mariners Cove, Newfoundland” should be adjusted to “a tiny fishing village” in order to appeal more broadly.
- Divide your fiction into categories: literary/upmarket fiction, commercial/women’s fiction, and mystery/crime fiction. Demonstrate as clearly as possible which category each novel falls into.
- Include page or word count in your rights catalogues; German publishers want to know approximately how much it is going to cost to translate.
- Short stories and autobiographies are not a particularly big draw; stick to fiction and general non-fiction, particularly science/self-help/history/art.

The most interesting things I learned on the mission were these:

- How supportive the German public and German government are of independent publishing in the country. It absolutely astounded me to hear of fixed book prices, overnight wholesaler delivery to indie bookstores, and over €9 billion in profit from book sales.
- Live readings (either by authors or translators) are popular and well attended. They've truly cultivated a culture of appreciation for literature. This was especially interesting and helpful for making plans for FBF 2020. Bringing authors to actively participate will be much more effective than simply showing the book's cover.

The most important things I learned about the market were these:

- The talk at Literarisches Colloquium Berlin (LCB) was invaluable. I appreciated translator Frank Heibert's candor and frankness. He explained that there is a perceived need for "happy endings" in Canadian literature that does not necessarily jive with German sentiment. He said stories that aim to tackle issues and teach lessons are seen as too didactic to German readers, and autobiographies in particular exude a sense of "too much information." Readers prefer dark topics that are more realistic; they want to be provoked and stirred. In short, he said, "bet on class, not on mass."
- I was pleasantly surprised to learn about what a big deal being the Guest of Honour country at FBF really is! This presents a unique opportunity to provide context about Canada to German readers that otherwise might not be there. The increased interest in our country will hopefully spill into Germany's rich literary market, creating a demand for Canadian content.

I have follow-up meetings at FBF 2018 with most of the publishers I met with during the speed-dating event. Many initially turned down one of our novels (Carol Bruneau's *A Circle on the Surface*) but they are now actively reconsidering after hearing of the translation incentive from the Canada Council for the Arts, and hearing that we would be willing to bring Carol to FBF 2020 to participate in readings and events (which are, as I learned, extremely popular in Germany).

Orca Book Publishers – Ruth Linka

The German publishers seem genuinely interested in Canadian books, especially with FBF 2020 coming. However, the timing is tight as many have filled their slots already. And for full length books (i.e., YA or adult) the time required for translation and production is longer. I would suggest focusing on one or two titles that you feel confident in.

Also, we heard mixed responses to typical Canadian content (the Wild West, etc.). For children's books, there is little interest in Indigenous content, and very little in the old cliché of Canada being the wide, wild country. The interest I had was in urban, contemporary content. There also seems to be very little appetite for serious content or stories with a message, especially for YA. The publishers I met with were all more interested in lighter fiction, and not at all interested in our non-fiction about

environmental and social topics (except for one publisher). There was little to no interest in non-fiction for kids.

I was very interested to see German publishers' reactions to our picture books and the various illustrators we use. The response was not uniform, but there is definitely an aesthetic in the German market. In many ways it does not overlap with the North American look, especially when there is a more American focus to the book. However, the more "European" style illustrators are ones that got more interest and that will inform how I present books at FBF and going forward.

There were some very interesting talks about the German market, about the supply chain in particular, including terms and shipping. I'm very interested in the possibility of distributing English-language books in the European market. This is something we discussed at various points during the week.

I have followed up with all of the publishers I met, both privately and at the speed-dating events. I have made offers on four books I saw at one of the private meetings I had (arsEdition, who were not at the Munich events) and feel there are some strong possibilities for sales with other publishers.

Rocky Mountain Books – Don Gorman

The German market for books is very strong, and their interest in Canadian published books, along with Canadian subjects and authors, seems just as strong. All of the publishers that we met with had a keen, romantic sense of the Canadian landscape and Canadian stories. In many ways, they seem to still consider the Canadian landscape somewhat "wild and free," with a large portion of our population spending a great deal of time "on the land," as opposed to "in the city."

Canadians considering working with Germans should retain a sense of pride regarding Canada's place on the world stage when it comes to culture and politics. The Germans understand and respect that we are not Americans or Brits, and that we are a unique country with our own cultural and political values.

I was astounded by the number of bookstores and publishers within Germany, along with how honoured bookselling and publishing is within Germany's economic realm as a vital creative industry. The numbers spoke for themselves:

- In 2017 the German book market generated over €9 billion, compared to €1.6 billion for music, €2.1 billion for gaming, and €2.8 billion for film.
- There is a national distribution system for books, which means there is 24-hour delivery across the country.
- In spite of competition from various social media platforms and streaming video, books and publishing remain strong.

- In 2017 Germany published 72,499 new titles—9,890 were translations from English, French, or Japanese.
- Ebook sales in Germany are marginal, hovering around 4.5% (compared to 15% in the US).
- There are roughly 3,000 publishing houses in Germany, with a workforce of approximately 24,100 employees.
- Unlike many markets, Germany has a “fixed pricing” model for books, along with a reduced VAT tax.
- There is essentially a national coalition for the book market in Germany made up of publishers, booksellers, and wholesalers.

As detailed above, the German book market is very strong and vibrant, with a huge number of bookstores scattered throughout the country, strong government support, and a coalition system that brings publishers, booksellers, and wholesalers together to discuss and address industry concerns. Too, there is a definitive interest in Canadian books and authors in this market, as especially as it relates to the romance of landscape and the outdoors.

Over the summer, contact has been sporadic, but it certainly has been positive. I expect communication to increase during the month of September as we lead up to the 2018 Frankfurt Book Fair. Many of the publishers expressed interest in setting meetings for the fair, and I fully intend to attend in both 2018 and 2019, leading up to Canada’s role as Guest of Honour in 2020. I have sent rights catalogues to all of my contacts and have half a dozen appointments for Frankfurt 2018 as of the end of July.

Support from Creative BC on this initiative has been hugely important. As Canada’s premiere publisher of outdoor writing, landscape photography, and adventure travel, I think that Rocky Mountain Books has a great deal of potential in Germany in terms of BC’s love of the outdoors and our province’s dedication to promoting “Beautiful British Columbia.”

Second Story Press – Emma Rodgers

Some tips for Canadians considering this market:

- For publishers of books for children and YA, there is opportunity as this category is expanding in Germany.
- The school/learning category is the only non-fiction category that is growing, not shrinking.
- Themes that Germans like about Canadian lit: remote, romantic idea of the Canadian wilderness. But also, the urban themes that are shared with Germany: immigration, city life, the push-pull between urban and rural.

- Several publishers and translators mentioned the “Guest of Honour effect.” This is the idea that Canada being the featured country at FBF 2020 will make a difference to German publishers looking to acquire rights. They want to take advantage of the attention that will be focused on Canada by the German media and which they feel translates to an increased demand by German readers for books from that country.
- Quote: “Canada will be on Germans’ minds in 2020...” There will be a Canadian context that would not otherwise be there, because the media, etc. will be talking about it.
- Not all the publishers we met with were familiar with the translation (and production) grants available or, in some cases, to what extent the funding went. Sharing this info with them, they acknowledged, might nudge them into considering a Canadian translation more seriously.

The information that the Guest of Honour country is really “noticed” by German readers and can lead to an interest in reading books from that country was heartening. It makes the efforts to connect with German publishers feel worthwhile. We also heard from some German publishers that they are interested in stories that deal with the history and present of Indigenous peoples, and that they could relate to the idea of reconciliation and the need to confront difficult histories.

The most important thing I learned about the German market was that children’s literature is the one area that is growing. As a result, many German publishers are expanding their children’s lists—or even creating them altogether. The Germans seem to have a good grip on their market statistics and plan their business accordingly.

In addition to this, it was important to learn that while German publishers are on the look-out for children’s titles, many of them (the majority that I met with at least) are not interested in books about people/places that are too “different.” They wanted places that were relatable/seemed close. They also were generally not as interested in books that dealt with “hard” topics, looking more for stories that could be described as “fun” and “adventure.” There were exceptions to this: publishers who were explicitly looking for more political/socially aware children’s books, particularly in the area of girls’ stories/girls’ empowerment.

I have contacted all of the publishers (20) I met with in Munich and Berlin, and have been setting up meetings for Frankfurt 2018. All of these meetings so far are with publishers Second Story Press has not previously dealt with. The majority requested to review at least one of our titles (often three or four). Many of them are publishers or editors of adult books, which again we are eager to contact.

It was valuable to hear from and make contacts with the two translators we met during the trip, and to learn from them that sometimes a respected translator can champion a book to a German publisher and possibly influence its chances for publication.

It was also very heartening to see the importance that Germany/Germans put on the publishing business and the idea of reading books. Our visits to the two literature houses in Munich and Berlin were inspiring.

The Cooke Agency International – Suzanne Brandreth

Specifically for publishing, though I expect it would also apply to other businesses, I would say now that introductions have been made we should be discriminating, thoughtful, and consistent in our submissions and follow-ups. We should send only what is the best of our list and most suitable for the publisher's list and respectfully follow up in a timely manner. We want to sell as many books as possible for 2020, of course, but the lasting legacy of FBF 2020 is closer ties between the Canadian and German publishing and reading communities. This is a happy consequence of demonstrating that we were listening in the panels, presentations, and meetings.

I hardly feel an expert on the market, but I would say for publishing and non-publishing professionals trying to work in Germany, preparation is key. We were fortunate in that the Canada FBM2020 team provided us with guidance in advance of the mission (e.g., practice pitches, knowing books on the list) and throughout the week (e.g., bringing business cards, using full name when introducing self, punctuality, etc.). These tips might seem basic, but they are fundamental.

Although I have been attending the Frankfurt Book Fair since 2001 and have made several sales trips to Germany between book fairs, it was only on this trip that I discovered exactly how diverse and vibrant the German-language publishing scene is (e.g., regionally unique, historically distinct, multinational, or independent).

If I may, I'd like to highlight two things:

1. I was struck, as I know many of my fellow attendees were, by the positive impact of fixed book pricing laws on the health of Germany's book retailing, publishing, and literacy rates. We visited several bookstores and were amazed by the range of people shopping in actual stores versus online or at big box stores—children, teens, adults, families, the elderly. It was a true highlight, and several of us spent our last days in Germany people-watching at bookstores.
2. Early on in the trip a German publisher commented on the warm regard that many Germans have for Canadians and Canada. He envisaged an enthusiastic response at FBF 2020 to traditional Canadian elements (e.g., nature, weather, rural, immigration), but perhaps even more so to unexpected elements (e.g., urban, Indigenous, crime, visible diversity).

We're thrilled to report that we have already received two offers, one from an imprint of Penguin Random Germany, the other from a Berlin-based independent press!

We have also received inquiries about the titles listed in FBM2020's online catalogue (thank you!) and as a result of the publisher speed-dating and office visits in Munich and Berlin. We are in the midst of our follow-up with the publishers and I fully expect that we will receive additional offers for our children's and adult lists, fiction and non-fiction.

Cooke International is producing a four-colour, printed catalogue for distribution at FBF 2018 and LBF 2019 and via our German co-agent.

We will be sending two agents from Cooke International to FBF 2018 (as opposed to one) and two agents from CookeMcDermid (as opposed to one) in order to maximize the number of appointments with German editors and publishers.

The immediate result of the trip will be the sale and inclusion of our titles in the 2020 program, but the lasting impact of FBM2020 will be the deeper, and I think, lasting ties between the German and French-and English-Canadian publishing communities. Thank you!

UBC Press – Melissa Pitts

My main tip is to begin contacting German publishers soon!

Also, while access to translation funding is helpful and may indeed clinch a deal, some German publishers may be willing to take a risk with just 50% funding, or even less. In the realm of fiction, these observations were helpful:

- Canadian writers want positive outcomes; they work too hard for happy endings. Germans want to be provoked. They prefer “bad” endings.
- Canadian writers provide too much explanation—long didactic passages to get across information set in the guise of fiction.
- Auto-ethnographies: tumble into exhibitionism; a literary memoir is okay, but not the self-reflexive confession trope that is popular in Canada.
- The most interesting thing I learned on the mission was about the consistent themes that came to the fore in terms of how Germans perceive Canadians:
- Canada is “a nice country” whose citizens and government respect First Nations and successfully support multiculturalism.
- It is a country of immigrants, almost all of whom have succeeded.
- Canada “has the presence of nature in huge dimensions” and its writers convey the beauty of a wild and untouched world.

The result is an interest in books that do the following: talk about multiculturalism; explain and explore Indigenous culture and history from an Indigenous perspective;

explore environmental issues; and discuss the politics, philosophy, and political theory that promotes diversity and inclusion.

The most important thing I learned on the trade mission was how deeply regulated the German publishing and bookselling market is, from a business perspective not an editorial approach. In particular, I thought this was fascinating.

In 1825 German publishers and booksellers together created a single association, originally charged with “simplifying accounting procedures” between the two ends of the book business. Known now as Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels, it has become a very powerful regulatory force with its main focus on maintaining net book pricing (based on the book “as a cultural asset”) and copyright protection.

According to the [Börsenverein website](#): “Today, the Börsenverein is an umbrella association bringing together roughly 5,000 businesses, among them 1,700 publishing companies, 3,000 bookshops and antiquarian booksellers and 70 intermediate book trade businesses. In the course of internal reform, business and politics were separated—with the Association remaining responsible for political work, and commercial activities being taken over by its business subsidiaries: Frankfurter Buchmesse GmbH (Frankfurt Book Fair) and MVB Marketing- und Verlagsservice des Buchhandels GmbH.”

We will be following up on rights sales to several publishers, but most notably: [C.H. Beck](#), [Surhkamp/Insel](#), and [Matthes & Seitz](#). In total, there was interest expressed, by several publishers, in ten UBC Press titles.

University of Toronto Press – Suzanne Rancourt

In the non-fiction book category, German publishers are interested in short books on current events. There is interest in titles on politics, immigration, health and wellness, environmentalism, and sustainability all geared to a popular audience.

German publishers do look at the backlist catalogue for potential translations/co-publications. This came up in the course of the speed-dating sessions.

Trade publishers should take advantage of the large number of possible venues for promoting Canadian authors and their works, including the various Literaturhaus throughout Germany, the Leipzig Book Fair, the Literarisches Colloquium Berlin, as well as opportunities at FBF.

For non-fiction scholarly books, it is important to remember that much of the audience will read English. The challenge is to make those English language titles available through the wholesalers and on to libraries and specialized bookshops.

I was interested to learn the extent to which translators may be involved in scouting potential new projects for established German publishers. Christiane Buchner’s

presentation at the Literaturhaus also outlined the ways in which translators help to promote books (in the absence of the author) through readings, launches, and presentations. Translators are identified on the covers and title pages of books and often receive royalties. Frank Heibert, also a translator, gave an excellent talk at the Literarisches Colloquium Berlin on the German perception of Canadian literature and cultural identity. He cited the common tropes of Canada as a wilderness country, our history of two founding nations, our reputation for welcoming new immigrants, and our engagement with our own colonial history in our treatment of Indigenous peoples. At the same time, he stressed the importance of telling a good story and that German publishers are open to experimental forms of writing.

Germany has a substantial, dedicated book buying public. With over 6,000 bookstores nation-wide, a more than €9 billion market, and over 3,000 presses, it occupies an enviable position. While the number of overall readers is declining and buying fewer books, the publishing industry (through the Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels) is taking steps to identify the social and market factors responsible for the decline. They also have mandated fixed pricing for their books, to which all print and e-vendors must adhere. This regulation helps to support smaller independent bookstores in the face of large multinationals and chain stores.

Four of the presses I met through the speed-dating process have already contacted me. Follow up messages have been sent to all the presses, with the submission of PDFs, reviews, and ancillary information as requested to ten publishers. Invitations for follow-up meetings at FBF 2018 have also been sent.

Westwood Creative Artists – Carolyn Forde

The German market is a very robust and competitive one, with very high volume, and many authors translated from English and French (of course other languages too, but these are the most frequently translated). German readers are erudite and there is a real culture of reading, book buying, and participating in cultural events that focus on books (i.e., readings, signings, translator events, etc.). Canadians looking to sell into the German market need to understand that the bar is very high and books that have the best chance of finding a German publisher are of the highest quality within their category, as they will be competing with books from around the world. Try with award winners and critically acclaimed titles and books that have been bestsellers in Canada.

Germans seem to gravitate towards a romanticized ideal of Canada—books that focus on or are set against the backdrop of nature (boundless forests, seaside, mountains, etc.) are strong sellers in German, and also books that focus on the immigrant experience appeal to their sense of what Canada is. I believe in the upcoming period, leading to FBF 2020 and beyond, a strong strategy is to continue to try these types of books, but to also work to expand the understanding and appreciation of non-traditional views of Canada: the urban, the gritty, the politically complicated, the unexpected. With interest high in Canada now, books that round out what German readers experience of Canada have a very good chance, alongside the more traditional takes.

German readers like to be challenged, and don't want a neat wrap-up to a story. They want conversation starters, and they are okay with unhappy or ambiguous endings in literature. In non-fiction, it's important to remember that the name recognition of a Canadian author is very important in Germany if the book is to succeed—or the book must have something to impart that no German author can.

We learned many things, but most interesting was the structure of the book industry and the protections built into the law designed to keep the industry strong. In particular, the fixed price model, wherein the price of a book is the same no matter when or where it is purchased, protects the diversity of the industry. It protects small bookstores from having to compete on price with large chains, thereby making the consumer's choice of where to purchase based on more than strictly price. This allows the independent bookstores to thrive, not only because their pricing is the same, but also because they are able to position themselves as community hubs—places where you can not only buy your book for the same price as at a big store, but you can also participate in community events, readings, excursions to culturally interesting or important places, signings, book club nights, personal recommendation programs, social media interaction, and newsletters. Price protection allows for a more curated and specialized experience for those who want it.

It was also very interesting to learn how the industry is structured, and that the Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels (German Bookseller and Publisher Association) is owned by the publishers, the wholesalers, and the bookshops, and it in turn runs the Frankfurt Book Fair, various trade magazines, and a Media Campus that trains media and bookselling professionals in addition to administering very important prizes (the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade, etc.). The convergence of so many varied interests seems to create a focus on what all of these organizations have in common: servicing the reader! It was amazing to hear that a bookseller could place an order and receive the books the next day (via the wholesaler, whose trucks travel around at night, their drivers armed with keys to each store). This not only results in great service to the customer that is on par with overnight delivery by Amazon, but also eliminates the need for a store to house large amounts of inventory, thereby reducing returns dramatically.

The most important thing I learned was the size and vibrancy of the market. It was amazing to discover that although Germany is roughly three times more populous than Canada, the book business has more than nine times the volume. It was also very interesting and important to note that the book publishing industry is thriving in comparison to other cultural products, with the book publishing industry measuring over €9 billion, the film market at €2.8 billion, video games at €2.1 billion, and music at €1.6 billion. Also, it was very interesting to note that this vitality may well weaken in coming years, as the strong numbers are attributed to an older demographic, with Literaturhaus (a book-centric cultural hub) seeing the vast majority of the public that engages in their events in the over-65 category. Younger people are not picking up books in the same numbers at all; therefore, now is the time to try to see how we can recapture young readers and compete against the other forms of entertainment vying for their attention (i.e., social media).

Of direct importance to us in the coming years is the impact of the FBF Guest of Honour program. It's amazing to hear that every journalist will cover/mention Canada's publishing scene and Canadian authors in the 2020 literary season, beginning in March at the Leipzig Book Fair, which heralds the launch of the literary season, and throughout the year leading up to Frankfurt in October—including a press junket to Canada, likely in the summer.

We have already been approached by editors with whom we met about books we discussed. We have shared all of the interest we garnered at the speed-dating sessions in Munich and Berlin with our co-agent who is now preparing submissions to these publishers. We've also garnered invitations for Madlen Reimer from btb and translator Frank Heibert for the Toronto International Festival of Authors, based on the strength of our meetings in Berlin. We have plans to sell ALL of our books in Germany!

Members of the Delegation

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Book*hug

Hazel Millar

Börsenverein des Deutschen

Buchhandels (German Publishers and Booksellers Association)
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Caitlin Press

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Éditions les Malins

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Literaturhaus (Munich)

Tanja Graf

Livres Canada Books

François Charette

Lux Éditeur

Alexandre Sanchez

Nimbus Publishing

Emily MacKinnon

Orca Book Publishers

Ruth Linka

Rocky Mountain Books

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