

## **Singapore Festival: The Gateway to Publishing, TV & media in Asia and Beyond**

### The Asian Festival of Children's Content

'Bananas in Pyjamas' in 14 languages had the audience laughing and singing along. I have to admit, when B1 and B2 spoke in French, they had my heart.

The Asian Festival of Children's Content (AFCC) is a multi-layered, complex, innovative festival that connects writers, illustrators, translators, film producers, agents and media with a broad audience from throughout Asia, India, Australia and beyond.

The heads of Nickelodeon, Walt Disney Television, Discovery Networks Asia-Pacific threw open the challenge to writers to produce new ideas and content for Asia. Trans-media is growing and the major companies are seeking new directions in story delivery. There are exciting new creative roles for trans-media writers. Eric Huang, Acquisitions Director for Penguin UK, was dynamic in showing the new and developing multi formats for stories including apps, TV and consumer products.

One of the world's leading playwrights and screenwriters, USA writer Jonathan Dorf, spoke about writing for theatre and the screen. He has had more than 900 play productions which have staged in every US state but Hawaii, as well as in Canada, Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia and New Zealand.'

Story was at the heart of the festival, with a diverse and rich variety of writers. It was exciting to see a high representation of Australian creators presenting across many genres. Arts Western Australia is supporting this Singapore- Asian festival, sending over some of our talented best writers and illustrators. The Society of Children's Book Writers & Illustrators ([www.scbwi.org](http://www.scbwi.org)) is also a partner of this festival, and SCBWI authors and illustrators participated and delivered various master classes.

Australian authors and illustrators who presented included Wendy Orr, Ken Spillman, Samantha Hughes, Meg McKinlay, James Foley, Chris Cheng, Dianne Wolfer, Samantha Hughes, Chris Nixon, Norman Jorgenson, Nicholas Mark, Robert Greenberg (who is also an AWGIE award winning script writer) and myself.



*Samantha Hughes, Meg McKinlay, Dianne Wolfer and James Foley at launch of Lighthouse Boy at Singapore Festival*

A wealth of Asian and international speakers included Shirim Kim Bridges (author/publisher USA), Holly Thompson (writer, Japan), Vivian Kirkfield (Educator/social media blogger, USA), Candy Gourlay (author/blogger, Philippines and USA), Daphne Lee (journalist/author, Malaysia), Nuri Vittachi (author, Hong Kong), Kathleen Ahrens (author/academic, Hong Kong), Marjorie Coughlan (reviewer/ editor of Paper Tigers, UK).

There was a huge representation of publishers from Asia across diverse genres including comics, manga, animation, picture books, novels and film.

Supported by the National Book Development Council of Singapore, the Asian Festival of Children's Content is a major industry, educational, literature and film event reaching across Asia. Executive Director Mr R. Ramachandran and Festival Director Kenneth Quek (also head of SCBWI Singapore), are at the forefront of leading this significant festival.

The country of focus this year was Malaysia. It was rather wonderful when the Malaysian Princess of Lahore opened one of the dinners. In 2014, the country of focus will be India.



Unlike many festivals, networking and the development of friendships across Asia-Pacific and beyond is pivotal at the AFCC. This was promoted by the generously sponsored evening events of entertainment and wonderful food. It was a festival of networking, insights into Asia-Pacific publishing, media and film, master classes, talks and books.

The date for the next AFCC in Singapore is 31 May to 4 June 2014 [www.afcc.com.sg](http://www.afcc.com.sg)



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