NEW
Swedish books for young readers
Spring 2013

Books for the Very Young; 3 Picture Books; 7 Books for the Newly Independent Reader; 21 Books for the Middle Years; 27 Books for Young Adults; 33 Authors and Illustrators; 42
There is a special focus on Swedish books for children and young people this year, because Sweden is guest of honour at the Bologna Children’s Book Fair. This makes it especially gratifying for me to present this extended introduction to many of the interesting titles published in Sweden in 2012 and early 2013.

The important task of producing this survey has been given to Åsa Warnqvist, critic and researcher of children’s literature, who is currently also employed at the Swedish Institute for Children’s Books. She has selected the titles she considers worthy of extra attention and also provides a short overview of each category.

I hope you find something here to tempt you to take a closer look. In this brochure you will find all you need to know about the books, plus contact information for the publishers and agents. There are also details of the financial support that is available. We also take a look at past and present promotion of Swedish literature around the world.

Enjoy your reading!

Susanne Bergström Larsson
Swedish Arts Council
In Sweden, there has been a great deal going on when it comes to books for the very young, thanks in large part to writers and illustrators well attuned to little children’s way of experiencing the everyday world. The picture-book artists have created memorable characters, executed designs of simple brilliance and spotlighted the day-to-day dramas of every small child’s life. Their work has become exceedingly popular and has in many cases been translated into other languages. Eva Eriksson’s classic Max books of the 1980s (sometimes known as the Sam books in English) with their two-word sentences were among the trailblazers, along with Anna-Clara Tidholm’s interactive Knacka på! (1992, Knock, Knock, Knock!), which encourages the child to knock on doors of different colours. Knacka på! celebrated its twentieth birthday in 2012 with a reissue in a larger format, the two editions bookending a kind of golden age of books for the very young.

Tidholm has recently embarked on a new series of books featuring Nalle (Teddy) in which she follows the same principle of direct appeal to child readers, inviting them into the fiction in a variety of ways. There have been three Nalle books to date, and more are set to follow. Other successful new series of the past few years include Stina Wirsén’s Vem (Who) books, Ann Forslind’s Bäbis (Baby) books and Annika Thore and Maria Nilsson Thore’s books about children in everyday situations, beginning with Vira vaknar (Vira Wakes Up) and Sami somnar (Sami Goes to Sleep) in 2011.
Books for very young children who are just graduating from pure pictures have been a real growth area in Sweden. They offer some hint of a narrative, but very little text. One of the high points of the genre at the moment is Pom och Pim (Pom and Pim) by established writing-duo Olof and Lena Landström. It is a cumulative tale and joins the current trend for non-gender-specific protagonists in books for younger children.

Pom is a child and Pim is the child’s soft toy. The two of them go out for a walk and a succession of things happen, with one thing leading to another.

When Pom falls over and hurts himself, his mother, called Manne, is dark-skinned and has lots of curly hair, unlike Micke, the ‘I’ of the story, who is a tiny chap with hardly any hair at all. This little boy loves everything about Manne: his hair of course, but also his grandma, the gunge he makes in the sandpit, and his broken stick. But he finds he has competition for Manne’s attention when another, tougher boy comes to join in the sandpit games.

There are several interesting aspects to this book. Rivalry among boys playing in a group of three is not a common theme in Swedish picture books for the very young, and this story also diverges from the current trend for boys to display empathy. Micke does not at all like having to compete for Manne’s favour, and makes no secret of his delight when a dog pees on the other boy’s boots and he runs off.

Norms are challenged in a whole variety of ways in Swedish books for the younger age group. This is certainly the case in the work of much-admired writer and illustrator Pija Lindenbaum, who received the prestigious Deutscher Jugendliteraturrezens for her picture book Tio under oliv (Shy’s Strange Sleepover) in 2012. In her Jag älskar Manne (I Love Manne), soon to have a sequel in a sibling drama called Kan jag med (So Can I) we find another recent example of a boy dressed in pink. The boy, called Manne, is dark-skinned and has lots of curly hair, unlike Micke, the ‘I’ of the story, who is a tiny chap with hardly any hair at all. This little boy loves everything about Manne: his hair of course, but also his grandma, the gunge he makes in the sandpit, and his broken stick. But he finds he has competition for Manne’s attention when another, tougher boy comes to join in the sandpit games.

Children and animals with attitude, characters who know what they want, are quite common in books for the very young. Everyday events are at the heart of Sanna Yöringe and Kristina Digman’s two books Katt kan på motogra (Cat Can in the Morning) and Katt kan i parken (Cat Can in the Park). They introduce us to an anthropomorphised kitten of unspecified gender that wants to do everything for itself: eat, clean its teeth, push the buggy.

There is no mistaking the fact that Cat is stubborn and a real handful. Once Cat has pressed the button at the pedestrian crossing, she will not let go, though Mum tries to drag her stubborn toddler across the road. Cat does not care that the cars are waiting and wants to press the button again.

These two books incorporate all the drama that can be generated on an ordinary morning by a small child at that difficult age. Digman employs a mixed technique with particular use of pastels, creating a soft, muted feel that contrasts with the drama of the text and the colourful behaviour of the main protagonist. This clash is a source of great humour, as we discover the headstrong little person with the big personality beneath the sweet exterior. No wonder Mum’s patience sometimes runs out.

New twists to classic repetition stories have plenty to offer the child on its voyage of discovery. In Lena Sjöberg’s Up, oblong book Vad har du bakom ryggen? (What Are You Eating, Monster?) there is a figure on each right-hand page, a person or animal, or even a robot or troll. The words are a series of guessing games, asking questions like “What’s that behind your back, queen?” and “What’s that behind your back, beard?” Over the page we see what the figure was hiding, and it is usually something unexpected. Lena Sjöberg’s digital pictures are as well done as always and have a distinct 1950s or 50s look.

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Jens Peter de Pedro and Lotta Gaffenberg also use digital techniques for their forthcoming board books Gupa start! (Open Wide!) and Vad äter du monster? (What Are You Eating, Monster?). In these, the child can find out what the sky monster, the junk monster and the sea monster are eating, and why the hippopotamus, rabbit, crocodile and everyone else needs to go to the dentist. de Pedro and Gaffenberg playfully exploit the possibilities of the medium, letting the pages of the book serve as gaping jaws, which catches us off guard and is great fun. It is no surprise to learn that the book’s creators have worked on animation and digital games: they pull off the trick of using limited resources to maximum effect.
Picture Books

From The Lightning Gobbler, illustrated by Joanna Hellgren
Sweden has produced a wide variety of picture books over the years, and what many of the writers and illustrators working in the genre share is an ability to put the child at the centre and tell their stories with a child’s-eye view, on the child’s side. This child’s perspective has been chosen as the theme for the exhibition of illustrators that Sweden is mounting at this year’s Bologna Children’s Book Fair. The majority of the illustrators referred to below are represented in that exhibition. Over the past decade or so a new generation of picture-book illustrators, the majority of them women, has made its mark in terms of artistic expression. If we want to highlight a single aspect of Swedish illustrative art for children, it is surely this one. Illustrators and artists such as Karin Cyren, Sara Lundberg and Fideli Sundqvist work like painters, with thickly applied colour. We often see elements of collage, as in the work of Clara Dackenberg, Joanna Hellgren and Emma Virke, and bold palettes and an awareness of design and form, found for example in the works of Emma Adbae, Lisen Adbae and Lena Sjoberg. Many of the illustrators also work digitally. What the majority have in common is that they were born in the 1970s or 80s and studied art, graphic design and illustration or comic-strip drawing at art schools in Sweden and/or abroad. This new generation of picture-book artists has imported a wider variety of visual milieux and new style influences into the Swedish picture book. We find plenty of naif elements along with a widespread fondness for a retro look. Along with all this there is an increasing number of portraits of girls with vivid imaginations who are not prepared to compromise their integrity.

Today’s emerging generation of picture-book illustrators have an influential forerunner in multiple-prize-winning author and illustrator Eva Lindstrom. Her recent Olli och Mo (Olli and Mo) is a road movie in picture-book form. It is better to journey hopefully than to arrive, the saying goes, but Olli and Mo would not agree. The duo set off on an outing, for a drive in the car. They have a road atlas and binoculars but they still get lost, and the question of where they are assumes an almost philosophical dimension.

“Where are we?” asks Mo. “We’ll soon be on the outskirts of page three,” says Olli, who has consulted the atlas. They stop for refreshments, but have to do the washing up to pay their bill since they have no money. By the time they have finished it is dark outside and they cannot find their way home. On pages showing nothing but forest, with neither Olli nor Mo nor the atlas in the picture, the following conversation ensues: “Where are we?” “Somewhere here.” “So where are we now?” “Here, maybe.” Their disillusion is total and we find ourselves in an existential discussion. What is a “here”, in actual fact? Or a “there”, for that matter? The maps all blur into one and “here” could just as well be “there”. They gradually extricate themselves from their confusion and come across Maud’s house, where they are able to spend the night before going back home. Which they must do quickly, for by then Mo has rediscovered the direction in their lives and the trip is over.

Eva Lindström’s pictures are suggestive and deeply atmospheric. Leaves, flowers and seed pods feel their way across the pages. There is a transparency and fluidity to the dominant blue-grey colours that creates a sense of an underwater landscape where everything is floating. When the characters are at their most lost, everything in the picture dissolves, including perspective and depth. There is no way of establishing what is up and what is down. The disorientating sense of not knowing where you are is carried through at every level. Add a little crazy humour and you have a sure-fire success.
The everyday realism in Swedish picture books is inevitably played out largely in Swedish settings, but there are occasional noteworthy exceptions. Ulf Stark and Sara Lundberg’s Yukup Tokstollen (Yakup – the Fool) is one of them. Nothing is said about where the story is set, but since all the names are Turkish and the pictures mediate a sense of somewhere in the east of Europe we can assume that we are in a village in the Turkish countryside.

In this village lives Yakup, whom they call Fool since he is so clumsy. He stumbles and trips, knocks over glasses of milk and is always losing things. He is not very good at reading either. The letters go buzzing off like flies. Yakup can see that the nickname is not really meant unkindly, but he still starts feeling stupid and wonders what will become of him when he grows up. Luckily his uncle is to hand, with his own special brand of consolation: “Being a Fool isn’t the worst thing. A Fool makes everybody else feel smarter.”

Perhaps he will be able to take part in the village darts competition after all, as he has always dreamed of doing? He has in the family. One of them wrote a collection of poems to his boots.” But Yakup really is a Fool, or is there some other explanation for his clumsiness? Perhaps he will be able to take part in the village darts competition after all, as he has always dreamed of doing?

Yukup Tokstollen is a picture book about preconceptions, about casual, inaccurate assumptions that stick like glue and the dangers of prejudging someone. Sara Lundberg is one of the outstanding new picture-book illustrators of the decade and here she captures the village and its swarm of inhabitants with great sureness of touch. The palette is warm and vibrant, and Lundberg evokes mood and temperament with her sensitive mixture of thickly applied colour and water-based tints.

The theme of friendship recurs in a number of other picture books of interest. Sofia Nordin and Matilda Ruta’s Mirja och pojken i det rosa huset (Mirja and the Boy in the Pink House) shows friendship blossoming between a boy and a girl. This is Ruta’s first book and her digital collages reveal a strong feeling for form. The dominant green shades are almost overwhelming, splendidly framing this adventure in the heat of summer.

Mirja has decided to walk all summer in protest at the family spending it in the country with Granny and Grandpa. But once they get there she finds out that a boy, William, has moved into the pink house next door. Although they have not met, they start communicating with each other. A potato in a shoe here, a few magic signs there. They leave each other more and more messages, and finally a picture showing where they are to meet. This is a friendship that develops without human contact, and a face-to-face encounter is kept as the treasure at the end, once the map has been deciphered.

Respecting and even celebrating differences is also the theme of Anna Platt and Maria Källström’s first book Ester Arg och Daisy Galej (Kit Storm and Daisy Delight). Ester Arg and Daisy Galej are neighbours and, as their names indicate, one has a very fiery temperament and gets angry about the slightest thing, while her neighbour is always happy and content with life.

But they are friends, despite their differences. They do everything together: play croquet, go to the swimming baths, have coffee. And indulge in a banana feast, since they both love bananas, as we can see from the decor of both their homes. Clothes, paintings, cushion fabrics – there are bananas everywhere. But that seems to be just about the only thing they have in common. How strange that Daisy is always so happy, muses Ester, and raises the question of their differences.

Maria Källström uses digital collage techniques to create her pictures, yet there is something nostalgic about them. The 1950s-look of the book as a whole is echoed in patterns and the two house interiors. The theme, on the other hand, is timeless. The story teaches us that people can be different and see things in differing ways, yet still be friends. Ester is allowed to be cross and not feel ashamed of it, not sink in Daisy’s estimation because of it, and above all not feel obliged to change. The effect is liberating.

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Emma Adbåge’s character Leni knows that friendship can get tricky when three want to play, and like Mirja she sulks when things do not go her way. In the third and latest book about Leni, *Leni’s Olle* (Leni’s Olle), she is going to play with her friend Olle, but when she arrives, Olle’s neighbour Kiran is already there and the day does not turn out at all as Leni had imagined. So she sticks out her lip.

Few illustrators can do sullen children’s faces as well as Emma Adbåge. As in her previous work, Adbåge rolls out this drama of jealousy in loving detail, in settings characterised by the retro style interiors of which she is such a master.

Impediments to friendship are also spotlighted in Maria Nilsson Thore’s *Cheeky and Scamp Each on Their Island*. Cheeky and Scamp each live on a small rocky island in the middle of the sea. They are generally content with their lives, but one dark, gloomy evening they each start thinking it would be nice to have some company. They both hit on the same brilliant idea, and send each other an invitation, with the help of a passing bird. But neither of them knows how to get across the sea and, both being fairly lazy by nature, both decide to wait for the other to turn up. And there the story could have ended, but for the fact that they wake up one morning to find their world has been transformed.

Maria Nilsson Thore’s stories focus on the important things in life, but there is always something engagingly unassuming about them. The distinctiveness of her pictures has wide appeal, and in 2011 brought her a double nomination for the most prestigious of Swedish literary awards, the August Prize. Her signature style is one of pleasantly muted colours, attention to detail and intricate patterns.

A friendship between a nursery-school class and a pig is not something we encounter very often. *There’s a Pig at Nursery* (There’s a Pig at Nursery) is a first picture book for Johanna Thydell, acclaimed author of novels for young adults. She has hit on a tone that is both poetic and full of fun. The story starts with the world’s loneliest pig standing in the field staring wistfully in the direction of the nursery school. In a trice it has dug its way out of its sty and is there at the nursery gate. The children catch on straight away. They realise the pig wants to be part of the group and they know everybody should be included – that is what they have been taught – so they let him in. The pig can’t believe his curly-tailed luck. But are pigs really allowed at nursery? No, the children know they must keep him out of sight of the staff, and thanks to their concerted efforts and creativity they manage it. At least temporarily. And while it lasts, both the pig and the children have a wonderful time.

*A Pig at Nursery* is a charming tale that poses a very pertinent question. It extends the discussion of belonging and exclusion to consider whether it is realistic for everyone to join in everything. The answer is not a definitive yes or no, but for this particular pig everything works out in the end. The charm and humour of the text is matched by Charlotte Ramel’s pictures. Her crayon and watercolour brush technique captures the essence of the nursery world and its individual characters.
We find another animal with a snout trying to get closer to the human world in Charlotte Lannebo and Emma Göthner's Veke och den röda baddräkten (Veke and the Red Swimsuit). Veke is a young wild boar who grubs around in the forest and fields with his family. The farmer is less than happy about his visi tors and chases them away: the human world is not the wild boar world.

One day Veke finds a red swimsuit by a lake. He tries it on and it fits perfectly. But the other wild boars do not appreciate human clothing since they make them look sassy and easier to hunt, so they give Veke an ultimatum: take off the swimsuit or leave the herd. So Veke goes, for he loves his swimsuit. As he walks through the forest he gets thinking, but the grown-ups are very influential. He orients himself around two girls, cousins, who have known each other all their lives. They like the same things, and their very funny idea is thinking, Together. At a noisy family party when Granny comes home from hospital, they try to find some peace and quiet for a bit of thinking, but the grown-ups are very attentive and they are interrupted wherever they go. Finally they seek refuge with Granny, who is asleep in an armchair. They find a little haven, a room of their own, under Granny’s big embroidered scarf, which they make into a tent behind her chair. And then they think. About life and about Granny’s death, which they know is coming.

Mormonsjö is a sensitive story about children's right to a place of their own and some space for their thoughts, a collaboration between Joanna Hellgren’s watercolour and crayon pictures with elements of collage. The colour on the double-page spreads in which the girls’ imaginations are given free rein is vibrant, the free-flowing watercolours contrasting with the turbulence of the everyday world. Joanna Hellgren is an illustra tor, comic-strip creator and graphic designer with a number of exhibitions to her name in Sweden and other parts of Europe. Her first picture book Ladugårds småmålar (Promisel, Said Smidge) was one of the winners in the illustration competition run by the publishing house Natur & Kultur in 2009.

There is plenty of sibling love, too, in the pitch-perfect Ensamblad vals på en scen (The Best Singer in the World), creation of Ulf Nilsson and Eva Eriksson, who have collaborated with each other many times before. The pair have been making picture books together for thirty years and their work has been translated into many languages. Ulf Nilsson is also the body writer for children and young adults to have received the August Prize twice.

This delightful story is narrated by an unnamed boy of six. He loves singing and acting at home in front of his little brother, who adores everything he does. But things get much more difficult when it is time to celebrate spring with a school play on a pep ter stage with real spotlights. At that point, stage fright sets in. Our narrator tells his teacher he doesn’t want to be in the play, but she comes up with a solution: he can sit beside the stage and just come on to announce the end of the play. The only costume left when he comes to choose his costume is a mole suit, an appropriate disguise for the light-shunning little boy who wants to be invisible. The dress rehearsal does not go well, and bedtime brings nightmares.

Ensamblad vals på en scen is about not daring, about being scared of making a fool of yourself in front of other people, but also about overcoming that fear and realizing that people who never dare can miss out on some big experiences. It is a warm and hopeful story that tackles powerful emotions. Eva Eriksson’s gentle, timeless pictures in pencil and crayon accurately capture the child’s feelings, through mien and body language and also by the interplay of light and dark in a variety of settings. Eriksson’s pictures strike a perfect balance between the hootie darkness and the hopeful light radiated by the brothers’ relationship.
In the marked retro fashion in picture books of recent years, the aesthetic of the nineteen-forties, fifties, sixties and seventies has found expression in the idiom and/or interiors of a good number of illustrators. The most consistent proponent of the retro look is Lena Sjöberg, whose picture books and non-fiction titles for children recapture that mid-twentieth-century feel. Sjöberg’s latest offering is a non-fiction book about eggs, Härdkokta fakta om ägg (Eggs: The Hard-Boiled Facts), appearing in the same series as her earlier Kalla fakta om is (Ice: The Cold Facts, 2001), for which she received publishing house Opal’s non-fiction book prize.

In Härdkokta fakta om ägg, the reader is led nimbly through the history of the egg, its uses, religious significance, the reproductive cycle of animals and much, much more. How can a chick breathe inside an egg? Did dinosaurs lay eggs? When was the egg cup invented? The book is packed with facts and ingenious insights, and the pictures are consistently excellent, with an abundance of distinctive vignettes. Due for publication in Sweden in time for Easter, it will surely be a sought-after Easter present for children.

Lena Sjöberg also has a new picture book out, Cirkusläggare på luffen (Circus Fleas On the Road), a tale in billowing verse about two fleas on a round-the-world trip, particularly their time in the Spanish capital Madrid, to which they find their way in a case of smuggled rum. They get along as performing fleas at Circus Vaudeville until it burns down one night. We view the seething city from ground level and the feel of vagabond life, earthy and occasionally sad, permeates both the words and the pictures. A love story and an adventure tale, irresistibly combined.
who has made a speciality of picture books. One exception is Leta loppan! which was devised on the same principle. First one flea, then two, then three and so on are hiding in the detailed black and white pictures and rhyming verses. It takes both concentration and keen observation to locate them. Lisa Sjöblom’s atmospheri-
catic pictures are reminiscent of woodcuts and unique in the world of children’s literature, yet we accompany it through its whole life, from the first flakes of snow to the patch of dirty brown which is all that is left by the following summer.

Hitta barnen! (Find the Children!) which was devised for things that are beyond our reach. The language is poetic but also suf-
fused with humour, and fit well with the rather surreal pictures, clearly in-
fluenced by the visual world of Tove Jansson. In the moon wolves’ forest all kinds of plants grow very tall. Horses are smaller than a ball of wool and we happen across odd things like a hat, a pile of books or a cake hidden in the undergrowth.

For obvious reasons the story takes place at night, against the backdrop of the starry sky. It is probably the darkness that makes the moon wolves slightly unsettling, despite their cuddly appearance. Or perhaps it is the fact that it is hard to work out precisely what species of animal they are. Their name and their fascination with the moon clearly make us think of wolves but their tufted ears make them look more like lynxes and their overall look is rather reminis-
cient of the mogwai that Billy gets as a present in the film Gremlins. They are a strange gang, and after the twist at the end one is left not knowing quite what to make of them. But by that stage, it is impossible not to smile at their unpredictable tricks.

It’s not my fault.” But in the end the truth dawns on her. We gradually learn her life story and discover why she be-
grudges other people their sleep. Jöns Melgren’s Night has a body of its own and wanders through the town like a dark, translucent shadow as it grows stronger. The pictures are dom-
ninated by the complementary colours yellow and violet, their warm and cold shades creating a light-dark dynamic.

There is another collective in Mån-
ulvarna (‘The Moon Wolves’), illustrator Malin Ahlin’s first solo picture book. Moon wolves are creatures that live in the forest. They love all things shiny and glittery, and live up to their name by liking the moon best of all, staring dreamily at it every night. One night the urge is so strong they try to reach the moon in all sorts of ways. They jump and climb, but it is all in vain. Just as they are about to give up, they have another idea. With the help of the fire-
flies they launch a balloon and set off. Månulvarna is about our yearning for things that are beyond our reach. The language is poetic but also suf-
fused with humour, and fit well with the rather surreal pictures, clearly in-
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There are two other picture books that make interesting use of the dark and what it implies. In Sigrid och Natten (‘Sigrid and Night’) a new picture book by writer, film-maker and illustrator Jöns Melgren, Night has accidentally ended up under the kitchen settle in Sigrid’s flat. “You’re not supposed to be here,” says Sigrid, popping Night into her friend. A sensitive, consol-
ing treatment of a subject that is always with us.

The Shadow Side
Text/Il: Per Gustavsson
Rights: Natur & Kultur
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We also encounter darkness and shad-
ow in Per Gustavsson’s new picture book Skuggsidan (‘The Shadow Side’). Gustavsson has made his name interna-
tionally for his plucky princesses, but in his two most recent picture books he has gone in new directions, developing as an artist in the process. In the first of these, Maskrosdagen (‘Dandelion Day’), a boy called Martin spends the day with his dandelions. The story evolves into a poetic and philosophical reflection on the transience of life and the power of the imagination.

In Skuggsidan, Gustavsson has taken a further step towards serious subjects, depicting fear of the dark in a new and personal way. In an attempt to master the falling darkness, the main pro-
tagonist Ragnar creates a world of shadows by drawing it with his new pencil. It is a way for him to confront and take con-
trol of his fear, and ultimately make the darkness his friend. A sensitive, consol-
ing treatment of a subject that is always with us.
The first years of the twenty-first century have seen a marked increase in books for reading aloud and for the start of independent reading. They cover a broad range of themes, but it perhaps comes as no surprise that one of the most popular, both in Sweden and abroad, is junior detective fiction. This is thanks in no small part to prolific Martin Widmark and his “LasseMajas detektivbyrå” (The JennyMaya Detective Agency) series, which has been translated into almost thirty languages. Series – of varying lengths – combining suspense and humour have long been a recipe for success in books for the newly independent reader. Categories such as classic ghost stories and stories with an element of magic have also enjoyed a renaissance in recent years. Martin Olczak’s adventure series “Jakten på Jack” (The Hunt for Jack) is a prime example of the latter. The books feature Jack, who grew up in an orphanage but has found out that his parents have been abducted by werewolves. These heart-stopping, Stockholm-set adventures are constructed like detective mysteries but are also swarming with supernatural beings: phantoms, werewolves and witches. The same is true of several other series including Thomas Halling’s “Trio i trubbel” (Trio in Trouble), featuring three siblings who get caught up in one hair-raising adventure after another. Fantasy and magic has been a real growth area in publishing for the age group that is starting to tackle longer books, but there are still plenty of down-to-earth stories set at home and school.
Inspector Gordon is the only honest cop in Gotham City, so it is a name that inspires their plan to force Mitzi’s parents to pull themselves together. Difficult home circumstances of this kind are not particularly common in Swedish books for new readers, which tend to focus more on adventure and hilarious turns of events. But like so many other problems, this is a theme that is working its way down through the age groups, which does make for an easier transition to the more overtly problem-oriented subject matter of books for slightly older children.

Mitzi in the Middle
Text: Mårten Sandén
Ill: Åsa Arnehed
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Mitzi is another seven-year-old facing an emotional dilemma. She is an intelligent and thoughtful girl, good at chess, but growing up in a home where the adults fail to shoulder their responsibilities, Mitzi’s parents are an artistic couple who live up to all the stereotypes: they are emotional, pig-headed, chaotic and egotistical. And when conflicts arise, Mitzi is often caught in the middle.

After one particular parental argument, Dad decides he will sleep out on the balcony. Mum and Dad are not talking to each other, so Mitzi gets roped in as go-between and has to keep Dad supplied with the food and toiletries he needs out there in the October weather.

Mårten Sandén’s Mitzi i mittre (Mitzi in the Middle), delicately illustrated by Åsa Arnehed, makes uncomfortable reading on the subject of role reversal, when adults behave like children and children are forced to compensate. Luckily Mitzi is able to turn to Grandpa, who shares her interest in chess. When he finds out what is happening, he refuses to let her stay in the flat. In the end it is a chess move that inspires their plan to force Mitzi’s parents to pull themselves together. Difficult home circumstances of this kind are not particularly common in Swedish books for new readers, which tend to focus more on adventure and hilarious turns of events. But like so many other problems, this is a theme that is working its way down through the age groups, which does make for an easier transition to the more overtly problem-oriented subject matter of books for slightly older children.

Ulf Nilsson, long established as a successful children’s writer, has launched a new detective onto the children’s book scene in Sweden. Inspector Gordon is a nod to all those ageing, world-weary policemen we know from British television crime series. And it will not be lost on those who know their Batman that Inspector Gordon is the only honest cop in Gotham City, so it is a name that comes with heightened expectations.

Sure enough, Ulf Nilsson’s Inspector Gordon is a fellow you can rely on. He runs like a dark undercurrent beneath the pre-school target audience, but relatively benign one, carefully tailored to dispense. The case to be solved here is apparently only one, as the title hints: Kommissarie Gordon – det sista fallet (Inspector Gordon – The Last Case).

The stories portraying children’s everyday lives are inevitably very home and school based. One of the leading lights in this area is Rose Lagercrantz, who has been writing highly readable and sympathetic books for new readers for many decades.

Lagercrantz’s latest offering is a series of titles featuring one of the minor characters from her popular Mårten Borg books, a girl called Dunne. Dunne has lost her mother, yet manages to have a positive outlook on life and find reasons to be cheerful. But day-to-day worries still dominate the plotlines. In the first book, Mitt hälsiga liv (My Happy Life, 2010) her best friend Ella Frida moves away, and Dunne’s sadness runs like a dark undercurrent beneath the surface of the free-standing sequel Mitt hjärta hoppar och svettar (My Heart Leaps and Laughs).

Here, Dunne’s life is turned upside-down when her classmate Kudden openly declares his love for her. This generates envy from other girls who are in love with Kudden, and they start to freeze her out and pick on her when no one is looking. Dunne retaliates, but too publicly, so the blame falls on her. It is a question of who is really guilty and who needs to apologise to whom.

The plot takes an unexpected and interesting turn when Dunne’s dad discovers what has been going on. The child’s perception of injustice is the focus of this warm account of life in Year 1, which engages with the whole gamut of a child’s emotions. The same is true of Eva Eriksson’s many black-and-white illustrations, where the mood shifts readily from anger to joy, to those phenomenal sulky expressions and moodily furrowed brows at which she excels.

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Astor’s friend Ruben feels sorry for Astor and decides to help him out. The only question is how, but then Ruben finds a book about hypnosis in the library and that seems to offer the answer. He teaches himself how to hypnotise people and persuades his dad to give them the money for a trip to the fair, where Ruben knows there is a fortune teller. Ruben’s plan is to make her tell Astor’s fortune and foresee that he will be a great success. And that is what happens. But not in quite the way Ruben planned.

This is not the first time Ulf Stark’s characters have used hypnosis to help them make their way in the world, but it is the first time they have used it to such good effect. Readers are left to ponder whether the hypnosis can really take the credit on this occasion.
The Roma are an ethnic minority in Sweden and their literature seldom gets any attention, so it is heartening when it does. The collection of seven Roma stories Det var en gång det var inte var (Once Upon a Time Romani Tales), retold by Bagir Kwiek and Monika Hirsch, comprises mainly stories told by Roma who came to Sweden back in the 1970s, who have kept their treasury of tales alive by oral retelling.

The book is one of the results of a long-term project in Gothenburg designed to highlight Roma history and culture, but the book holds its own without this political framework.

In it we encounter people and animals who use cunning or humility to win wealth and love, like the man who is thrown out by his wife with nothing but a cockerel, and by means of the cockerel’s williness makes enough money to start a new life.

This is an appealing collection of stories, sensitively illustrated by Jonas Rahm, who brings out the pathos of the tales using intense colour and strong brushwork. His style displays delicate pencil and crayon strokes.

The parallels of structure and message between the Roma stories and Western folk tales and fables are evident, inevitably making us think how much we have in common, and how rarely we affirm it. This book is a timely reminder of the fact.

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Books for the Middle Years

Titles aimed at 10-12-year olds, too, are dominated by crime fiction, ghost stories, thrillers and fantasy – preferably in series form, with new adventures for the same set of characters, and preferably with genre mixing. Another major category for slightly more confident readers are pony books. Lin Hallberg’s best-selling series about ponies Sigge and Teddy just goes on expanding, as does Pia Hagmar’s equally popular series about pony-loving girls like Klara, Flisan and Millan. A number of new authors have also been tempted into the genre, among them Inger Frimansson, whose books revolve round a gang of horse-mad girls and the group they set up, called the Kona Club.

Magic is also a common element in books for the more confident reader. A common denominator here is the books’ resistance to categorisation as straightforward fantasy; the plots are often firmly rooted in a realistic setting. Sometimes the magical element is hard to put one’s finger on, even after the book is finished. Was it magic, chance or imagination that intervened? The reader is left to make up her or his own mind. In Katarina Genar’s Pensionat Vidablicks gäta (The Mystery of Broadview Guest House, 2011), for example, Saga meets a cat that leads her to a dilapidated guest house where she solves an old mystery.

But there are also plenty of stories in which magic takes a firmer hold of the narrative, albeit in a realistic setting. Writers like Ingelin Angerborn, Mårten Melin and Per Nilsson work in this way. Per Nilsson’s popular Pim-Pim and Extra series seems at first glance to be an ordinary school story about a boy and girl in Year 7, but it soon turns into something more. By the end of the first book, we know that Extra is an angel who has come to help Pim-Pim carry out an important task.
There is magic of a more explicit kind to be found in the books of Mårten Melin, for whom Swedish folklore is often an ingredient, its figures popping up in our everyday lives. In the trilogy that began with Fördandadul (Trans: formed, 2013), we soon realise that the author has constructed a universe all of his own, in which characters from a variety of his books can coexist. The action in Fördandadul is set at the Skogsbingel Boarding School, also known as the Monster School, where all the pupils have supernatural powers. In the second book in the series, Jag är Love (Everybody Loves Me! And there is Nothing I Can Do About It), we find out that Hella, one of the pupils, is in fact the Devil’s daughter, and sister of Lucia with whom Martin fell in love in Melin’s That Damned Lucia, 2007.

But Pixi is longing to get back to Earth and feels dead inside. So she is told to attend night-time lessons, where she meets the school vampire Adam and Jenny the ghost, who has decided to stay on Earth a bit longer. These three nocturnal characters become friends and are drawn into mysterious events.

Mårten Melin gets deeply involved in his stories and makes them a real pleasure to read. Amongst all the dizzying, supernatural adventures, we never lose sight of the important issues. In simplified terms we could perhaps describe the themes of the three Skogsbingel School books as Life, Love and Death, but friendship and being different are the overarching concerns.

Pixi’s Book

Text: Mårten Melin
Rights: Rabén och Sjögren

In Et fir utan speglar (A House Without Mirrors) Mårten Melin also raises serious subjects in a story with magical overtones. Twelve-year-old Thomaisse’s great-niece Henrietta, once a famous actress, lies dying in her house and her heirs have assembled. Two of them are only interested in the money but the third is genuinely bereft. Yet all three are incapable of any kind of emotional openness, a deficiency they risk passing on to their children.

As the title intimates, there are no mirrors on the walls of this house, but one day Thomaisse finds them all in a large wardrobe in a dressing room. Henrietta is of English descent and refers to the room by an English name, “the changing room”, which turns out to have a double meaning. Like the children in C.S. Lewis’s The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, anyone entering the wardrobe finds themselves in another dimension, and time, though still in the same house. Whatever they experience there has the potential to help and to change things. The wardrobe offers a fresh opportunity, but is there any way of uniting these families at last?

Ett hus utan speglar is about daring to see yourself, about how you become the person you are, and how you can be brave enough to want to change. Moa Schulman’s striking, even sinister, mono-chromatic illustrations make what a labourious process this can be, the story takes its time to develop, the many descriptions allowing pause for thought.

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe

Text: C.S. Lewis
Rights: Rabén och Sjögren

There is also magic at work in Ingelin Angelborn’s books. With her flair for constructing spooky narratives in which the past and present meet, she has published a succession of books that have become readers’ favourites. Her latest Mänfågel (Moonbird) is a gripping story of an impossible, but crucial friendship, written in eminently readable, fourteen-year-old finely-honed prose.

On one particular evening, fourteen-year-old Vendela is feeling like the loneliest person in the world. She lost her mother several years before and her best friend has moved to London. So she writes a letter about her yearning for a friend, which she lies down to the river and wedges it between two stones without really knowing why. To her astonishment, Vendela receives a reply, but such a strange one that she thinks it must be a joke. The letter bears an old-fashioned ten öre stamp, the language is very formal and the letter is signed “Your own said, Wilhelm Silvius.” Is it though the letter writer is from a different time Vendela continues writing to the boy and putting the letters among the stones by the river, since the address on the back of the letter is too long.

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A House Without Mirrors

Text: Mårten Melin
Rights: Rabén och Sjögren

Save Him!

Text: Camilla Lagerqvist
Rights: Rabén och Sjögren

Trying to change the course of history in a challenge also faced by thirteen-year-old Tawni in Camilla Lagerqvist’s Rädda honom (Save Him!). Tawni’s parents send her to stay with her paternal grandparents in England, to try to help her get over the death of her other grandparents a month before. On the journey she starts getting strange text messages that tell her “Only you can save him,” and once she is in England it gradually becomes clear to her what she must do.

One stormy night eighty years earlier, a ship sank just off the village of Mye where her grandparents live. On board the ship were some young men who had just signed on as crew members, but they all vanished into the depths as the storm raged. One of these young men must now be saved. The only question is how.

Camilla Lagerqvist has come up with a thrilling, mysterious and tender story in the spirit of Edith Nesbit, where the crucial question is all time-travel adventures is whether one really can change the past. And what will happen if Tawni cannot do it?
It is not all magic and ghosts in books for increasingly confident readers. There are also slices of everyday life, considerations of the issues and questions that exercise children on the verge of their teen years. One such child is *Moa-Lina Croall’s* character Lisa, who we already know from *Det är jag som är Lisa* (*I’m Lisa, 2009*). Lisa is a creative, thoughtful girl, who in that earlier book was trying to cope with such problems as an absent mother, a grandmother with Alzheimer’s and a lack of friends. But one day a circus troupe arrives, and with them a girl called Nova, a year older than Lisa. A powerful friendship develops between the two girls.

In the standalone sequel *Jag blundar och önskar mig något* (*I Close My Eyes and Make a Wish*), Lisa is twelve and her friendship with Nova is taking a few knocks. Some older and tougher girls, including Lisa’s big sister and her friends, have given Lisa and Nova special dispensation to join their secret club. Nova fits in easily at the club but Lisa feels left out. She does not find the club activities very much fun. She says and do things Lisa does not really want to join in with, but she feels she has to. She is pressed into shoplifting, drinking alcohol and sneaking into the teen disco, but still feels excluded. However hard she tries, nobody ever really sees her. And her sadness that Nova is drifting away is intensified when she realises that what she feels for Nova may be more than friendship.

**Jag blundar och önskar mig något**

Hanna in *Moa Eriksson Sandberg’s* *Den första flickan skogen möter* (*The First Girl the Forest Meets*) is another girl on the threshold of her teenage years. Hanna is twelve, and experiencing all the agonies of approaching puberty in the course of the summer holidays. Hanna lives in a small town on the West Coast. Her parents argue, there are growing tensions between Hanna and her two best friends, and to crown it all a girl about the same age as Hanna, a fellow pupil at her school, is found murdered in the woods. There are rumours that she had also been raped.

It is unusual to find such an unembellished account of pre-pubertal girls at the time of their sexual awakening. Hanna’s periods start, her body changes and she spends most of her time thinking about boys and sex, though she still retains her innocence and romantic dreams. The woods function as a kind of metaphor for the changes in Hanna’s body. They were once a place where she felt safe, but suddenly she scare her and she feels she is being watched there. All these new elements are frightening and uncomfortable to her, yet also attractive and exciting.

**Den första flickan skogen möter**

**Jag blundar och önskar mig något**

**ABC and All About D**

Nina Ulmaja is a designer at the Albert Bonnier publishing house and usually spends her time designing other people’s books rather than her own. But her interest in letters and the alphabet prompted her to publish a book of her own, *ABC å allt om D* (*ABC and All About D*), which received the August Prize in 2012. *ABC å allt om D* is a book for all ages, bursting with facts about the origins and uses of letters. In presenting the alphabet and its history as a whole concept, it achieves something really new. The first three double-page spreads summarise the entire span of history and then each letter of the alphabet has its own double page. There is a short, pithy account of how each letter came to be, and the rest of the space is given over to a riot of letter-related information. What is an initial letter? Where did we get the ampersand? What is the hardest vegetable to spell?

Nina Ulmaja not only wrote this book, she also illustrated and designed it. Its pages fizzle with colours and shapes. No less than 121 different typefaces have been used here, and that’s not counting all the logos. The inventiveness of the design even extends to the spine of the book. The strip of green rubber across the spine sums up 4,000 years of the history of writing and there is even a chance to try your hand at braille.
Today's Swedish books for young adults are characterised by their serious approach and a preoccupation with internal psychological processes. More humorous books do exist, but not in great numbers. The focus is on the difficult aspects of teenage life, and the young people are often allowed to speak for themselves as first-person narrators, or through narrative voices close to the main characters. But the most notable trend overall is the increase in the number of female writers and main protagonists in recent years. There have been debut novels in the young adult category from several young women authors and most of them have opted to write about the experiences of girls and young women, with particular reference to the girls’ own perceptions of desire and sexuality. Writers in this category include Sara Bergmark Elfgren, Moa Eriksson Sandberg, Klara Krantz, Sanne Näsling and Sara Ohlsson. Young adult fiction writers are also increasingly producing crossover titles on the boundaries of adult fiction. One hallmark of this is their more advanced language, and once again it is women writers who are in the vanguard. Genre fiction naturally continues to be well represented in books for young adults, with horror and thrillers gaining ground.

The fashion for dystopias and novels about climate-related catastrophes has now reached Sweden. Stefan Casta’s thrilling *Den gröna cirkeln* (The Green Circle, 2010) and its sequel nestle perfectly in this post-apocalyptic niche.
Fire
Text: Sara Bergmark Elfgren and Mats Strandberg
Rights: Grand Agency

The book everyone was talking about in 2011 was Cirkeln (‘The Circle’) by Mats Strandberg and debutant Sara Bergmark Elfgren. This is the first part of their Engelfors trilogy and has been lapped up by young people and adults alike. Cirkeln proved a popular and critical success at home and also did extremely well abroad. One can see that the success was well deserved. The sequel, Eld (Fire) has now been published, and it is anything even more of a hit.

In Cirkeln we make the acquaintance of six girls in the sparsely populated country area round the small town of Engelfors, where they have all started at the same upper-secondary school. They don’t know each other and they have little in common. At first, One night when the moon is stained red they are called together and informed that they are witches, and what is more, The Chosen Ones. An old prophecy states that only they can prevent the apocalypse. Amidst all the usual high-school distractions of homework, parties, difficult love lives and parental conflicts they must now master their magic powers and, most importantly, learn to cooperate and trust each other. Together, they are the circle.

In the second part of the trilogy, Eld, the girls are getting closer to the last battle. The focus of the action is twofold: the approaching Witches’ Council trial which Anna-Karin, one of the circle members, is facing for previous misuse of her powers; and the sect-like association calling itself Positive Engelfors, which has got its claws into the community following the death that occurred in the first book. Around the authors weave a nail-biting plot that culminates in a thrilling denouement even better than the climax of Part 1. The word “positive” has never been so terrifying.

But what makes Eld really special is its psychological depth. Cirkeln introduced us to a gallery of characters experiencing all the usual teen angst, and now the authors can look deeper. The circle draws closer together, unexpected friendships develop and preparations for Anna-Karin’s trial take

a thought-provoking turn when the girls gain more insight into each other’s lives.

Eld also offers another strand of psychological development. Ida has been the most reluctant of them all to accept her role as a circle member and has not come across to the reader, or indeed to the other girls, as a sympathetic character. She is stuck-up, cocky and self-absorbed. At the start, one of her fellow circle members goes so far as to call her “something just as evil as what they are meant to stop”. But Ida gradually starts to change and rethinks her loyalties. By the end of the book, we have seen another Ida and been confronted with one of the trilogy’s most emotional moments so far. This combination of nerve-wracking narrative momentum and psychologically convincing portrayals of such a diverse range of characters is skilfully done. By the last page of Eld, readers will have both laughed and cried.

The final step awaits in Nyckeln (‘The Key’) due out in the autumn of 2013, but to keep us going until then the publisher Rabén & Sjögren has issued the interim volume Berättelser från Engelfors (Engelfors Stories), a series of short stories in graphic-novel form in which Engelfors character Mona Månstråle is our guide. Using tarot cards as her starting point, Mona reveals various things we did not know about the past and the present, and hints at what is to come. Comic-strip artists Kim W. Andersson, Karl Johansson and Nina Neidestam provide the pictures.

TOP 10 All Time High

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<th>Author/Illustrator</th>
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<th>Genre</th>
<th>Rights Sold – Series</th>
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Another graphic novel that has made its mark is **Simon Gardenfors's Död kompis** (My Dead Mate). Gardenfors uses his own life as his basis for his comic strips, and this autobiographical book was inspired by the sudden death of his friend Kalle, at the age of nineteen.

It is 1996 and the story opens with the news that Kalle has been struck down by meningitis. One minute Kalle is fine, two hours later he is dead. Simon, the main protagonist, goes back in his mind to when he and Kalle first met and then continues in the present, telling us about life after his mate's death, and how he tries to find a way to move on and join the adult world. It is a very personal account yet somehow universal, as grief and bereavement strips, primitive TV computer games and the graphic design of an earlier era, and have a directness that really conveys credibly and precisely. We see sorrow from all angles: the brother's emotions range from anger and frustration to cockiness, vulnerability and hatred. They are teenage boys who find it hard to verbalise their feelings or communicate with each other; their relationship is complex and there is a good deal of unfinished business between them, a lot that remains unsaid.

This is a time when the boys' parents find it hard to get through to them, and develop their own way of coping with their feelings. Mum is over-protective towards Andreas, while Dad loses himself in his work. Then Andreas decides he is going to do three things before he dies: he's going to tell Martin what a bloody idiot he is; he's going to tell Martin how much he loves him; and he's going to make something that will still be there when he's gone.

The viewpoint of the two boys are conveyed credibly and precisely. We see sorrow from all angles: the brother's emotions range from anger and frustration to cockiness, vulnerability and hatred. They are teenage boys who find it hard to verbalise their feelings or communicate with each other; their relationship is complex and there is a good deal of unfinished business between them, a lot that remains unsaid.

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Perhaps unsurprisingly, death is a recurring theme in books for young adults. One of the most moving is a debut book, *Melodron vinter ad Hemmet* (Between Winter and Heaven) by Elin Bengtsson, which tells the story of teenage brothers Martin and Andreas. Andreas is dying and only has a few months left to live. He is still able to go to school, but has no close friends and at home spends most of his time in his room. His medication will not cure him but helps to ease the pain.

His older brother Martin could hardly be more different. He is the tough, super-confident guy who is with one of the best-looking girls in the school. He plays electric guitar and has lots of friends, but won't let any of them get particularly close. Andreas wants to be like Martin but knows very well that he isn't. For his part, Martin gets annoyed that his brother has such a grey and uneventful life and is not trying to make more of the time he has left. But Martin also feels guilty that he is not Andreas' “buddy to the end – the best big brother in the world”. His hard and nonchalant attitude at home and at school is plainly a front, a way of coping with his grief and his fear of Andreas' illness, and his constant guitar playing is his shield against the world outside.

The dynamic of the relationship between girls is a frequent theme in books for young adults. There is often a fear of being left on the outside or betrayed by a friend. A woman's or journalist Ulrika Lidbo's *Inte vatten värd* (Completely Worthless), a novel about the true state of affairs. But by it. Lidbo offers explanations of what has made Edith the way she is and lets her gradually come to understand the true state of affairs. But by then it is too late.

*Between Winter and Heaven* is about being trapped where you don't want to be, in a destructive friendship where someone else imposes all the conditions and there is no way out. It is about guilt and what lack of self-esteem can make you do in a tight spot where the winner takes all. Lidbo's words flow easily, the language is concentrated, and the novel skillfully and ingeniously constructed.

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the threads of a first-rate story should
a writer with a really good eye for how
the fiction within the fiction, shows us
opening. The ingenious composition,
which gets a real lift from its unusual
of self-defence, but also something she
love. Elsa’s new identity is a weapon
of childhood and then Katarina and
work things through, underlined by
Elsa has an overwhelming need to
the urge to write about the real E and
Evil Enemy, the fallen superhero K. But
keeps watch over the universe and The
this time the tale of superhero E who
too painful she starts another story,
What takes shape is Elsa’s own story,
to her.
The title of the book is from the first
line of Håkan Hellström’s most famous
song and his music is ubiquitous in
the story. Like the notebook, it lends Elsa
the strength to reappropriate her life. That
reappraisal is the goal of the change she has undergone...
To finish, let us stay in terror mode for a moment. Horror, psychological thrillers and ghost stories are increasingly popular in the young adult fiction market. Christin Ljungqvist’s debut borrows elements from all these genres in her story of seventeen-year-old twin sisters Mary and Anne, Kaninhjärta (Rabbitheart).

Mary and Anne have lived since birth in a virtually symbiotic relationship in which it is hard to say where one ends and the other begins. They look identical, and both have fragile rabbit hearts, but other than that they are not at all the same, more each others complement. Mary is the extrovert, impulsive, and destructive, while Anne is introverted and meditative. Ever since they were little they have been able to see and sense spirits. Anne can see and hear them, but it is Mary’s body they take possession of. Here, too, they are complementary, and their combined powers are those of a medium.

The events unfold one summer, when the girls have run away to find freedom in Gothenburg. They come into contact with a group of spiritualists looking for a girl who has been missing for nine months. She seems to have been kidnapped and may well already be dead, but the leader of the group has promised her parents that they will find her, whatever it takes. The sisters opt to help, a decision that is to jeopardise their mutual relationship.

Since Mary and Anne complement one another, it is impossible for one of them to disappear, but one of them wants to tear herself free from the symbiosis, from their interdependence. Anne receives early warning signals from the spirits, foreseeing Mary’s imminent death. Mary is suicidal and drawing near to the point of no return. Anne keeps her under constant surveillance and battles to save her life. Will she succeed? This ultimately becomes more important than the hunt for the missing girl.

If it is possible for something to be hair-raising and sensitive, unreal and everyday at the same time, then Christin Ljungqvist has put it into words here. Her suggestive story is told in long, winding sentences and a stream of imagery. Her language is rhythmic and dazzlingly beautiful, and the setting so closely described that we can almost feel the oppressive summer heat on our skin.

The sequel, the free-standing Fågelbarn (Nestlings), is written in a somewhat more straightforward prose and focuses on Hanna, one of the minor characters in the first book who can see ghosts and foresee events in the future. Fågelbarn revolves around a family drama in which a child murders a child, and is as intense and suggestive as a chamber play. It is as brilliantly written as it is horrifying.
Authors and illustrators

Emma Adháge
Malin Ahlin
Ingelín Angerborn
Åsa Arnehed

Anna Bengtsson
Elin Bengtsson
Sara Bergmark Eliason
Lina Bodén

Jonatan Brännström
Moa-Lina Croall
Petrus Dahlín
Pernilla Danielsson

Jens Peter de Pedro
Kristina Digman
Moa Eriksson Sandberg
Eva Eríksson

Lotta Geffenhlad
Katarina Genar
Per Gustavsson
Simon Gårdenfors

Emma Göthner
Joanna Hellgren
Hanna Jadvik
Ylva Karlsson

Klara Krantz
Anna Källström
Rose Lagercrantz
Camilla Lagerqvist

New Swedish Books for Young Readers | Spring 2013 | Authors and Illustrators
New Swedish Books for Young Readers

**Spring 2013**

### BOOKS FOR THE VERY YOUNG

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<th>Illustrator</th>
<th>Original Title</th>
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<tr>
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<td>High With The Ugly</td>
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<td>Bonnier Group Agency</td>
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<td>Blinking Stars</td>
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<td>Nilsson Thure, Maria</td>
<td>Nilsson Thure, Maria</td>
<td>Innan jag Tärnas</td>
<td>Before I Wake</td>
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<td>Wake and The Red Swimmer</td>
<td>Grandmas Scarf</td>
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<td>Signet och Noten</td>
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<td>Persson, Klas</td>
<td>Maximum &amp; Minumilin</td>
<td>Maximum &amp; Minimum</td>
<td>Rabén &amp; Sjögren</td>
<td>Bonnier Group Agency</td>
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<td>Persson, Klas</td>
<td>Million &amp; Sus</td>
<td>Million and Sus</td>
<td>Rabén &amp; Sjögren</td>
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<td>Skog, Lina</td>
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<td>Villa Min in the middle</td>
<td>Neiga Timmy and the Stolen</td>
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<td>Neiga Timmy och de stika skatten</td>
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### BOOKS FOR THE MIDDLE YEARS

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<td>Eriksen Sandberg, Mos</td>
<td>Ditts där ju! ditts där ju!</td>
<td>My Wish</td>
<td>Bonnier Carlsen</td>
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<td>Gehr, Anna</td>
<td>Gehr, Anna</td>
<td>Giften och önsket</td>
<td>Gift and Wish</td>
<td>Inspector Gordon</td>
<td>Bonnier Group Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bengtsson, Anna</td>
<td>Bengtsson, Anna</td>
<td>Den första fallet</td>
<td>The First Case</td>
<td>Rabén &amp; Sjögren</td>
<td>Bonnier Group Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bengtsson, Anna</td>
<td>Bengtsson, Anna</td>
<td>Mitta i mitten</td>
<td>Mitta in the middle</td>
<td>Rabén &amp; Sjögren</td>
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<td>Bengtsson, Anna</td>
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<td>Would you Like to see a star?</td>
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<td>Neiga Timmy and the Stolen</td>
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<td>Bengtsson, Anna</td>
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### BOOKS FOR THE NEWLY INDEPENDENT READER

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<th>Author</th>
<th>Illustrator</th>
<th>Original Title</th>
<th>English Title</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
<th>Rights</th>
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<td>Neidestam, Nina</td>
<td>Neidestam, Nina</td>
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<td>Once Upon a Time</td>
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<td>Melin, Mårten</td>
<td>Melin, Mårten</td>
<td>My Heart Leaps and Laughs</td>
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<td>Bonnier Carlsen</td>
<td>Bonnier Group Agency</td>
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<td>Lannebo, Charlotta</td>
<td>Lannebo, Charlotta</td>
<td>The Magic Coat</td>
<td>The Magic Coat</td>
<td>Bonnier Carlsen</td>
<td>Bonnier Group Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neidestam, Nina</td>
<td>Neidestam, Nina</td>
<td>The First Case</td>
<td>The First Case</td>
<td>Rabén &amp; Sjögren</td>
<td>Bonnier Group Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bengtsson, Anna</td>
<td>Bengtsson, Anna</td>
<td>A House Without Mirrors</td>
<td>A House Without Mirrors</td>
<td>Rabén &amp; Sjögren</td>
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<td>Neidestam, Nina</td>
<td>Neidestam, Nina</td>
<td>The Shadow in the Wall</td>
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<td>Never Too Late to Dream</td>
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<td>Neidestam, Nina</td>
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<td>The Best Singer in the World</td>
<td>Rabén &amp; Sjögren</td>
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</table>

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*New Swedish Books for Young Readers* | Spring 2013 | Titles, Publishers and Rights
Support for Swedish Literature Abroad

The Swedish Arts Council offers a support programme to help Swedish literature and drama to be more visible abroad. It consists of a translation grant, a project grant and a travel grant for publishers who want to visit the Gothenburg Book Fair. For more information, please visit www.swedishliterature.se

Support for Translation of Swedish literature and Drama

Who can apply? Applications for translation grants may be filed by foreign publishers – not translators or authors. Any publishing house applying for a grant must have well-documented experience of publishing quality literature and professional distribution channels.

What types of literature are given support?
- quality fiction, poetry, drama (in book form or performed on stage), children’s and young adult literature; literary non-fiction (no handbooks, academic works, travel or hobby books etc); – books that otherwise would have difficulties to be widely circulated abroad
- theme issues of journals and magazines including literature translated from Swedish.

What does the support cover? Applications can only be filed to cover translation costs, not for production costs or copyright costs. The translation must be made directly from Swedish.

What will be given priority? Priority will be given to introduction of the work of contemporary Swedish authors into a new language. Particular consideration will be given to translations of literature for children and young people into languages where Swedish children’s literature is presently poorly represented.

What should the application include? The application is made online, and should include the license contract, the translator contract, and the translator’s CV.

Support for Swedish Literary Projects Abroad and Travel Grants

Who can apply? Organizations or publishers (no authors or translators).

What types of projects are given support? Projects involving Swedish literature in translation, translator seminars, workshops, literature festivals etc.

What does the support cover? The support could cover travel and hotel costs for the Swedish participants, some translation costs, fees etc. One condition is that there is a local partner, as well as additional funding.

What should the application include? Applications must include a project description, a list of participants, a budget, and a statement of objectives and aims.

What projects will be given priority? Priority will be given to grants for the participation of Swedish authors whose work is being introduced in the country in question for the first time.

Grants for Publishers and Sub-Agents to Visit Göteborg Book Fair

The annual Göteborg Book Fair and the Swedish Arts Council will once again provide funding for non-Nordic publishers and sub-agents interested in attending the Göteborg Book Fair.

When? The fair will take place 26-29 September 2013.

Why? The aim for this programme is to raise awareness of Swedish quality literature in the international publishing sector and to reinforce the ability of Swedish authors to reach readers in other languages via translation.

Who can apply? Non-Nordic publishers and sub-agents who are interested in publishing/working with Swedish quality literature. Those who have not previously attended the fair will be given priority. Individuals cannot apply.

What will the grant cover? The grant will cover travel expenses and/or accommodation for up to four days and entrance card to all seminars at the fair.

What should the application contain? The applicants apply for the actual travel cost in SEK, and how many days they wish to stay. The hotel is booked by the Swedish Arts Council. The applications should also contain:
for publishers – a presentation of recent publications and where appropriate, description of contacts with Swedish publishing houses/agencies,
for sub-agents – a description of the agency and its activities.
## TOP 10 2012-2013 Rights Sold — Single titles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author/Illustrator</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>English title</th>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Agent</th>
<th>Languages</th>
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<tr>
<td>Rose Lagercrantz</td>
<td>Mitt lyckliga liv</td>
<td>My Happy Life</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ulf Nilsson / Eva Eriksson</td>
<td>Ensam mullvad på en scen</td>
<td>The Best Singer in the World</td>
<td>Picture book</td>
<td>Bonnier Group Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Astrid Lindgren / Kitty Crowther</td>
<td>Tomten är vaken</td>
<td>The Tomten</td>
<td>Novel 6-9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pija Lindenaun</td>
<td>Det är en gris på dagis</td>
<td>There is a Pig at Nursery</td>
<td>Picture book</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frida Nilsson</td>
<td>Med Gorilla</td>
<td>Young adult</td>
<td>Natur och Kultur</td>
<td>Natur och Kultur</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan Lööf</td>
<td>All under havet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stefan Casta</td>
<td>Everything I Say Is True</td>
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<td>Jujja Wieslander &amp; Sven Nordqvist</td>
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<td>Picture book</td>
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<tr>
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<td>LasseMajas Detektivbyrå</td>
<td>The JerryMaya Detective Agency</td>
<td>Novel 6-9</td>
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<tr>
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## TOP 10 2012-2013 Rights Sold — Series

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<td>Rabén &amp; Sjögren</td>
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</table>

### Publisher Addresses

#### Alfbeta Publishers
Box 4284
SE-102 66 Stockholm
+46 8 714 36 32
annakaisa@alfbeta.se
www.alfbeta.se

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