

News Release: American Library Association

Public Information Office
American Library Association
50 East Huron Street
Chicago, Illinois 60611
312 944-6780

From: Peggy Barber, Director
Public Information Office

For immediate release

Franklin Watts, Inc. and Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc. have been named winners of the 1977 and 1978 Mildred L. Batchelder Awards. The announcements were made Sunday, January 7, at the annual business meeting of the U.S. Friends of the International Board on Books for Young People, held during the American Library Association (ALA) Midwinter Meeting in Washington, D.C.

Franklin Watts, Inc. was cited for its 1977 publication Konrad, translated from German by Anthea Bell. Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich, Inc. was cited for its 1978 publication Rabbit Island, translated from German by Ann Conrad Lammers.

The Mildred L. Batchelder Award is given annually by the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), a division of ALA, to an American publisher for the children's book considered to be the most outstanding of those originally published in a foreign language, in another country, and subsequently published in English in the United States.

Two Award winners were announced this year to facilitate a transition to revised procedures for Award selection.

The 1977 Award winner Konrad, written by Christine Nostlinger, is the offbeat tale of a prefabricated boy--vacuum packed and

dd one - Mildred L. Batchelder Awards

programmed to be perfect--who is delivered by error to someone who never ordered him: an unconventional, tough-minded woman.

"In this International Year of the Child, it is satisfying to be able to honor a book that is not only a first-rate, capable translation, but also a highly original, genuinely humorous and totally contemporaneous work of fiction which holds undeniable appeal for children," said Ethel Heins, chairperson of the 1977 ALSC Award Selection Committee, of Konrad.

Born in Vienna, Ms. Nostlinger is an award-winning author who works as a journalist although she has written ten books for children. In 1972, she was awarded the Friedrich-Bödecker Prize for her contribution to German children's literature. The following year she won the German State Children's Book Prize. She is well known in the United States for Fly Away Home and Girl Missing, both published by Franklin Watts, Inc.

Konrad translator Anthea Bell of Leicester, England, has translated over 75 books for children and adults. Her notable achievements include such excellent novels as Barbara Bartos-Hoppner's Avalanche Dog (Walck) and Otfried Preussler's The Satanic Mill (Macmillan).

The Cat and the Mouse Who Shared a House (Walck), written by Ruth Hürlimann, and also translated by Bell, was named the Batchelder Award winner in 1976.

The 1978 Award winner Rabbit Island, written by Jorg Steiner, the English translation of Die Kaninchensel, is a book of interwoven themes--friendship, materialism and particularly, freedom.

and two - Mildred L. Batchelder Awards

Told through the adventures of Grey Rabbit, a long time "resident" of the rabbit factory, and Brown Rabbit, the newest addition, readers witness their escape and find themselves observing Grey Rabbit's subsequent inability to adjust to the outside world.

"Rabbit Island" is a fluent translation with an inseparable blend of words and pictures that transcends age levels, from upper elementary to adult, in both concept and visual stimulation," commented Ann L. Kalkhoff, chairperson of the 1978 Award Selection Committee.

"The Batchelder Award is for the publication of a fine translation, and praise is certainly due to translator, Ann Conrad Lammers. But the impact of Jorg Muller's illustrations cannot go unrecognized, as Rabbit Island is what it is because of the combined talents of Steiner, Lammers, and Müller," she continued.

Author Jorg Steiner, a native of Switzerland, also teaches and writes television productions and radio programs.

The Mildred L. Batchelder Award honors a former Executive Secretary of the Children's Services Division (now ALSC) who encouraged ALSC members to exert leadership in promoting children's wider understanding and appreciation of other cultures as depicted in translated books.

Presentation of the 1977 and 1978 Batchelder Awards will occur on International Children's Book Day (ICBD), April 2, in Louisville, Kentucky, hosted by the Louisville Free Public Library. Barbara Miller, ALSC's immediate past-president and Mary Somerville, Coordinator of Children's Services at the Louisville Free Public Library, will coordinate the ICBD program which will culminate in the presentation of the Award Certificates.

add three - Mildred L. Batchelder Awards

1977 Batchelder Selection Committee members were Ethel Heins (Boston, MA), chairperson; Rae Alkema (Malden, MA); Dorothy English (Seattle, WA); Clara O. Jackson (Kent, OH); and Amy Spaulding (New York, NY).

1978 Batchelder Selection Committee members were Ann L. Kalkhoff (Brooklyn, NY), chairperson; Barbara Feldstein (Newton Center, MA); Emily Holman (Rochester, MN); Henrietta Smith (Delray Beach, FL); and Suzanne Sullivan (Los Angeles, CA).