

how many times over the past 25 years has the winner been chosen due to reasons other than “the best book”?

Arundhati Roy won in 1997 for her first (and, she claims, only) novel, *The God of Small Things*. True collectors of the Man Booker Prize will want to add the first Indian printing to their bookshelf—the publisher was IndiaInk in New Delhi. This edition is scarce, but I have seen three or four copies over the past few years, in various conditions. Typically, this edition will command as much as US\$2,000 in very fine condition.

Yann Martel's *Life of Pi*, winner in 2002, is another interesting collectible because the true first is the Canadian hardcover edition by Knopf Canada. The book's initial print run was 5,000 copies, followed soon after by a second print run of only 2,000 copies. The text of the novel was changed when the book was released in trade paper back by Knopf Canada, and the American and U.K. publishers adopted the changed text for their editions. Anyone interested in reading the original text as it was first published would need to find an inexpensive copy of the second printing of the Knopf Canada hardcover. The agonizing part of Martel's win for me is that he had done some public readings of the novel in the spring and early summer of 2002, often with other, better known writers. I remember seeing Martel sitting at a table with huge stacks of his book (first printings), but everyone was lined up at the other authors' tables waiting to get their books signed. To think that there were literally thousands of dollars of collectible books sitting on this table, but no one knew (including me) at the time of its future value. The first printing of the Knopf Canada edition currently sells for about US\$600, or about US\$1,000 for a signed copy in very fine condition.

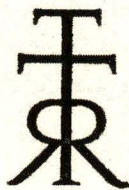
Shortlisted titles can pose as much of a challenge for collectors as the winners. If you are collecting Kazuo Ishiguro's *An Artist of the Floating World*, you need to know how to detect the first edition, first state from the first edition, second state: the book was initially printed by Butler & Tanners, but due to some quality issues with the printing, the publisher, Faber & Faber Ltd. switched to Richard Clays to complete the printing of the book. *An Artist of the Floating World* was shortlisted for the Booker Prize in the fall of 2005 and then won the Whitbread Prize in the spring of 2006.

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BINDING

*The deluxe issue
will follow later...*

FORTY-EIGHT YEARS after the book's publication, the 10 deluxe copies of *Gold* (1958) promised in Robert R. Reid's original prospectus were bound up and issued this past summer. *Gold* was Reid's second private press book, reprinting F.G.



Claudet's early B.C. monograph on extraction and processing. It was also Reid's first collaboration with Takao Tanabe, who helped with the printing and also worked on binding copies up, along with Reid's wife Felicity. Daunted

by the prospect of casing in 275 copies in quarter leather, Reid soon passed over the job to Victoria's Fritz Brunn. Two prospectuses were issued for the book, both of which promised 10 copies bound in full leather, priced at \$75. Reid never got around to soliciting orders for these deluxe copies, and they were never executed.

Jump a couple of decades: Brunn died, and unbound copies of *Gold* and two other Reid projects were purchased from his estate by the booksellers Stephen Lunsford and William Hoffer.

Jump another two decades: Reid came back from a visit to McGill University, where much of his archive is held, with extra copies of the prospectuses for *Gold* promising the deluxe copies. A friend who knew that Lunsford was in possession of unbound copies suggested now was the time to have the 10 copies bound up. Reid was keen (as always), Lunsford agreed, and things got rolling. An additional page explaining the deluxe copies' history was printed at Heavenly Monkey and added to the back of the book; Tanabe and Reid were corralled to sign the original colophons; and extra copies of the two prospectuses were stuck in. But who to bind it?

Two years passed. Enter Claudia Cohen, book binder extraordinaire, now living in Seattle. She took the commission on and was given a blank slate. The result was worth the wait: the books were bound in deep green morocco, with an elegant combination of blind and gold tooling. Reid's and Tanabe's press device (shown) was blind tooled into the front board, surrounded by a gilt floral oval. Each copy features unique marbled endpapers and comes in a gold-edged clamshell box.

Even allowing for an aggressive inflation rate, orders placed at the original time of purchase would have come out smelling sweet. With fewer than 10 copies available, the question hasn't been the book's price but who will be given the opportunity to purchase one.

THE ROYAL PICK

Shakespeare "fairly honest"

SINCE THE LAST column, one of the highlights of the auction year was the sale of a First Folio of William Shakespeare in early July. Sotheby's in London sold this "fairly honest copy" (which I presume means fewer facsimiles have been added to make it complete than other copies around) of the First Folio for £2,500,000 plus the buyer's premium. The buyer was Simon Finch Rare Books, and the word in the business and around the auction circuit is that this was a very good buy and Sotheby's may have been disappointed with the absence of many of the big bidders. Simon Finch has been quoted as saying "that the likelihood of another relatively honest copy coming up for sale in the next 10 to 15 years is small. The Berland copy, which we consider inferior, brought \$6,166,000 shortly after one the most cataclysmic events in modern history. It is a personal view that varies from one nationality to another, but the First Folio is certainly in our top five wish list of rare books." Of course, when another copy comes on the market, I will be here to comment on its sale.

Ulysses of London, catalogue #101, had a wonderful small collection of signed Edward Ardizzone material. This illustrator is very collectible. One unusual item that caught my eye was *The Fantastic Tale of the Plucky Sailor and the Postage Stamp* by Stephen Corrin, Faber, 1954, first edition with pictorial boards with the original dust wrapper at £225. This is a very short story, 20 pages, and quite a scarce item. They also had some original signed Christmas cards at £125. A favourite of many collectors is T. S. Eliot, and in the small collection offered for sale is a first edition *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats*, Faber, 1939, at £975, containing 14 poems. Originally it was intended to have as many poems about dogs as about cats, but only two of the former got written, so that aspect of the book was abandoned. I couldn't leave this catalogue without a mention of one of my favourite authors, T. E. Lawrence, and they have a very good first edition of *Oriental Assembly*, Williams & Norgate, 1939,

at £160; at the rear of this volume are about 100 photographs, mostly unpublished, by the author. Ulysses always produces a wonderful and varied catalogue.

William Reese of New Haven, CT, catalogue #249, *Early American Law and Legal Thought*, had a few items concerning Canada. There was a 24-volume run of the *Journal of the House of Assembly, Lower Canada, Quebec 1793-1817* in overall very good condition, printed in alternating English and French, at US\$7,500. Also a two-volume set bound in one volume of *The Provincial Statutes of Lower Canada...*, Quebec 1798-1830, printed in alternating English and French, at US\$1,250. Also *The Quebec Gazette*, Thursday, December 1, 1791...*La Gazette de Quebec*, Jeudi, 1 Decembre, 1791..., Quebec: Printed by Samuel Neilson, 1791, 12 pages folio, bound. This is the first and official Canadian printing of the *Constitutional Act of 1791*, by which Canada received representative government, Upper and Lower Canada were divided into two separate entities, and the rights of the French inhabitants of Quebec were confirmed. Very rare and priced at US\$15,000.

Henry Sotheran Limited's catalogue of children's and illustrated books had so many fine and beautiful items for sale it was hard to pick just a couple to highlight. This company was founded in York in 1761 and was established in London in 1815. On offer was *Sinbad the Sailor & Other Stories from The Arabian Nights*, illustrated by Edmund Dulac, Hodder & Stoughton, 1914, an exceptional copy in near-fine condition with 23 fine coloured plates, first edition deluxe, limited to 500 numbered copies, signed by Dulac, at £2,850. Also a first edition of *The Golliwogg's Desert Island*, by Bertha Upton and illustrated by Florence K. Upton, Longmans, Green & Co.,

EXHIBITIONS

Seattle booksellers Wessel & Lieberman will be hosting an exhibition of works by Vancouver artist Shinsuke Minegishi (November-December 2006), including his most recent book and suite of prints *The Tale of Three Black Boxes*. As part of the exhibition, the shop will be publishing a short essay by the artist, printed letterpress and limited to 100 signed and numbered copies. The first 25 will include a tipped-in engraving printed by the artist (the remaining copies feature the image printed in facsimile). See www.wlbooks.com for details.