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Janet Spaeth  
*University of North Dakota*

Bob Garrett  
*University of North Dakota*

Asako Yoshida  
*University of North Dakota*

Cynthia Shabb  
*University of North Dakota*

Betty Gard  
*University of North Dakota*

*See next page for additional authors*

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JANE KURTZ:
AUTHOR IN THE KINGDOM OF THE SNOW

One of North Dakota's best-kept secrets is no longer a secret: the state is home to Jane Kurtz, one of the new stars of children's literature. Kurtz has had seven books published. The latest is *The Kingdom of the Sun*. Six more are scheduled for publication within the next three years. The reviews are in, and all are rhapsodic about Kurtz's writing. In my recent conversation with Kurtz, she discussed her life, her writing, and her feelings about teaching.

Kurtz came to Grand Forks in January 1990. She remembers the cold as the movers propped the front door open to bring in box after box. "I thought, Oh, I can deal with this," she says with a laugh. "But I wasn't prepared for how long it lasted!" She can be forgiven her initial shock about North Dakota. She and her family—husband Leonard Goering and children David, Jonathan, and Rebekah—came from Trinidad, Colorado. Plus she had grown up in a warmer place, and that place was halfway around the world. When she was two years old, Jane Kurtz went to Ethiopia with her missionary parents, and did not move back to the United States until she entered college.

She did not begin her career writing children's books. Nor was her focus her Ethiopian background. Instead, she started with an adult audience in mind, and wrote poetry, fiction, and nonfiction. The idea of writing for children did not come to her until she had children of her own. With David, her oldest child, she read mostly books that had been her childhood favorites. When Jonathan came along, and then Rebekah, she began to tire of reading the same stories again and again. As a family, they discovered the public library, and as a writer, she discovered her true talent. It was love by immersion. She read children's books, "and nothing but children's books," she recalls. By doing so, she realized that she wanted to write for children.

And she has succeeded. Today, Kurtz's books are well received by publishing companies and hailed with critical acclaim. When asked what propelled her success, she's ready with an answer, and it's clear she's given it thought. First, she points out, she prepared. She studied for her new career. She haunted the library, reading and evaluating children's books and reviews of children's books. With this approach, she developed an overview of what had been published, and more importantly, what was being published. Kurtz points out the importance of being aware of the current state of publishing. As much as she may like an older book, she recognizes that today's market might not give that same story the reception it received when it was first published.

Kurtz uncovered two helpful sources: the "New Books" shelf at the public library and publishers' catalogs. These provided a comprehensive picture of the publishing arena, and by scanning through the listings, she formulated an idea of publishers' interests. As she prepared, Kurtz understood the need to balance creativity with profit. She began to ask herself the question every editor and publisher asks before accepting a manuscript, "Is there something here that will make this stand out and be financially successful?"

The second reason for her success was a sudden homesickness for Ethiopia. Perhaps lengthy winters on the flat plains of eastern North Dakota evoked a nostalgia for the green mountains of Ethiopia. Or perhaps Kurtz's children, as they grew older and asked questions about their mother's childhood, invoked memories that Kurtz had forgotten. Their childhoods were so different from hers. Her childhood seemed foreign, and it was.

The third reason was a seemingly casual conversation with Jim Aylesworth, author of several children's books, whom she met at the Writers' Conference in Children's Literature in Grand Forks. She asked Aylesworth about the marketability of retold Ethiopian folk tales. He encouraged her to submit them, despite the fact that Kurtz's prior agent had dismissed the possibility of their success. She followed his advice, and tapped into her knowledge of Ethiopian culture.

Kurtz credits UND's Chester Fritz Library with supplying the materials needed to hone her stories. Sometimes, she said, a book can evoke a new idea. As we spoke, she pulled one of the Library's books from her bag, *The Qemant: A Pagan-Hebraic Pleasantry of Ethiopia* by Frederick C. Gamst. This book, which she used while writing *Ethiopia, Roof of Africa*, became the root of her forthcoming work *The Storyteller's Beads*, a story of two girls from opposing ethnic groups who
Kurtz indicates that sales have grown out of the Grand Forks Children's Writers Conference, which is held every fall.

When asked what advice she would give a budding writer, Kurtz states that "The Box" makes Ethiopia "seem like a real place" when she can't be there. She has two versions of "The Box," and although one usually travels with her, the other has gone on its own to teach children in California, Missouri, Maine, Texas, and Minnesota.

"The Box" is just one example of Kurtz's creative teaching approaches. She tells her students to illustrate Trouble, one of her unpublished works. Kurtz supplied the teacher with copies of the photographs used by the book's illustrator. When Trouble sees print later this spring, the class will discuss with themselves what they think the book is about. Kurtz talks about creative ways to help children "get curious." With this curiosity, they begin to realize how people's lives are alike and how they are different. Above all, she is interested in making children aware of the lives other people lead.

When we spoke one snowy day in early March, Kurtz was preparing for a two-week trip to Ethiopia, where she would also try to speak at schools and bring awareness of children's books have limited slots. Kurtz describes the market as "extraordinarily competitive. Make [writing professionally] a priority if you ever have a hope of doing it." As she speaks, it's easy to see that she has the two ingredients for success: talent and a passion for writing.

Kurtz acknowledges the benefits of writers' conferences: "if you want to go at it professionally, you need a network of people to keep in touch with.

Kurtz says we can "celebrate our strengths" by looking for ways to get excited about books and writers. She does her fair share, frequently traveling throughout the state to promote reading.

The box also contains an issue of the magazine Faces that focuses on Ethiopia, as well as examples of Amharic writing, photographs and maps of Ethiopia. Examples of a manuscript's different stages are included to illustrate the writing process. These items, Kurtz feels, "give context to books."

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This case study of the Nuremberg Trials includes three sets of volumes published by the United States Government Printing Office reproducing primary documentation. As a whole, they represent three different stages of the Trials. The first set, Nuremberg Conspiracy, was published in 1946, shortly after the start of the International Military Tribunal trials. These three sets contain documentary evidence collected by American and British prosecutors in preparation for the IMT Trials. As such, it is much like a Grand Jury indictment of leading Nazi officials. The second set, entitled Roques Crimes and International Military Tribunal, consists of forty-two volumes. The first twenty-three contain the complete IMT Trial proceedings. These are indexed in the twenty-fourth volume, which is in turn followed by eighteen volumes of documents admitted as evidence. The majority of these are in German, although each is preceded by a brief abstract in English, and all are currently being exerted in English during the trial proceedings. The full set, Trial of War Criminals before the Nuremberg Military Tribunals, consists of eleven volumes that extract published text of the American proceeding. The volumes attempt to provide "as full and illuminating a picture [of the trials] as is possible within the space available." Although this set reproduces less than four pages of the complete text, it does provide an overview and a representative sample of the AMT cases.

The Nuremberg Trials can find it within the Elwyn B. Robinson Department of Special Collections. The Department houses the Nuremberg Trials Records Collection, consisting of 240 linear feet. Each volume contains approximately 1,000 pages of digitized typewritten text. Only twenty-two sets of Nuremberg trial records are located in the United States, and here is one of the most complete sets of the facts that appeared as an answer on a March, 1999. A comprehensive documentary collection documents virtually every aspect of the Trials. Materials include transcripts and excerpts from both the AMT and AMT trials, as well as documents introduced as evidence by both the prosecution and the defense, respectively. The collection is not complete, but it does contain many contemporary articles and speeches on the trials by legal experts. What is most significant for present-day journalists and defense including opening and closing statements, legal briefings and staff evidence analysis are all present. Although some materials are available.
humanists and social scientists. These include Eighteenth-Century Studies, Journal of the History of Ideas, Human Rights Quarterly, American Quarterly, and Modernism/Modernity. A listing of all titles is available on the Project's main page. On-line versions of journal articles are available up to four weeks sooner than their print counterparts. While the text is designed for on-screen reading, Project Muse attempts to retain the identity of each journal. Graphics are enhanced from the print version and are often in color.

The Project offers its own searching facility. It is possible to keyword search titles, articles within selected titles, headings, or the entire database. Journal issues are available from 1995, although the Project is exploring the possibility of adding back files. A "What's New" page announces the latest additions and enhancements, and also highlights notable features in upcoming issues. For example, the May 1997 issue of the Henry James Review features responses to the recent film "The Portrait of a Lady," directed by Jane Campion ("The Piano", 1993).

The Chester Fritz Library's Home Page hyperlinks to the Project Muse site at <http://www.und.nodak.edu/dept/library>.

Asako Yoshida, Reference & Research Services Librarian
yoshida@prairie.nodak.edu

Cynthia Shabb, Chief Bibliographer
shabb@plains.nodak.edu

UND ALUM GIVES A GIFT OF ART

In August 1993, Colonel Eugene "Gene" E. Myers and the late Florence Myers established the Florence H. And Eugene E. Myers Endowment through the University of North Dakota Foundation. The Endowment reflects Colonel Myers' appreciation for his UND education and his endorsement of the role of liberal and fine arts. The annual income from the endowment, held in perpetuity, has been designated for purchases of art books, graphics, plastic arts, and art history materials.

Colonel Myers was born May 5, 1914, in Grand Forks. He earned a bachelor of science in education in 1936 from UND, majoring in art, history, and social science. In 1938, he received a master of science in education, also from UND, with an emphasis in art and history. Myers then received a graduate degree in art from Columbia University and completed the Advanced Management Program at the Harvard Business School, as well as programs of study at Cambridge and Oxford Universities. He served as an art instructor at Columbia University and was a Professor of Art at the University of Vermont. Following a distinguished Air Force career, which ended in 1966, he became Dean of the Corcoran School of Art, Washington, D.C. He subsequently became Vice President for Management of the Corcoran Gallery of Art. Colonel Myers has co-authored or contributed to three books and published more than eighty articles on art, education, and his world travels. The late Florence Myers was a graduate of the Convent of Notre Dame in Philadelphia and was active in Colonial Dames, Daughters of the American Revolution, and the Huguenot Society.

Myers Endowment materials are selected by a committee of designated individuals from the Visual Arts Department and the Chester Fritz Library, in consultation with the North Dakota Museum of Art, the UND Foundation, and the UND President's Office. The first disbursement was received in the fall of 1996 and exceeded the expected $9,500. Endowment funds will enable the Library to substantially enhance its visual arts collection.

One outstanding recent acquisition made possible by the endowment's generous terms is Grove's The Dictionary of Art. More than fifteen years in preparation, the Dictionary, edited by Jane Turner, was released to critical acclaim in the fall of 1996. Publication was originally approved in 1980 by Harold Macmillan, former Prime Minister of Britain and owner of the family firm of Macmillan Publishers Ltd. The objective was to produce, in 25 million words, an illustrated reference work that provided comprehensive worldwide coverage of all the visual arts from prehistory to the present. The massive final product is a 34 volume set containing 32,600 pages, 15,000 images, and 45,000 signed articles written by 6,700 scholars from 120 countries.

No more complete guide to the world's art exists. Coverage ranges from descriptions of civilizations, to biographies, to archaeological excavations and much more. The decorative arts and the traditional fine arts of painting, sculpture, and architecture are given equal weight. Photography and contemporary art forms, such as performance art and multimedia installations, are also included. For those interested in the history of aesthetics, close attention is paid to collectors and collecting. Picture frame connoisseurs will discover 127 relevant illustrated pages, with specially commissioned drawings of representative types. Every country in the United Nations has its entry, from Afghanistan (27 pages) to Zimbabwe (3). The overview of African cultures extends to over 200 pages, and 431 pages describe Japanese art, from its earliest beginning to the 20th century. Every major subject has multiple entry points, including individual artists, schools, national origins and techniques. The final volume is an index to the entire set and contains 750,000 items. At a list price of $8,800, The Dictionary of Art exceeds the means of many libraries that might wish to acquire it. The Chester Fritz Library feels most fortunate indeed that the Myers Endowment has allowed the acquisition of this outstanding reference work.

Betty Gard, Reference & Research Services Librarian
e-mail: gard@plains.nodak.edu

Jean Anderson, Reference & Research Services Librarian
e-mail: jeaander@prairie.nodak.edu