

**THE PRODUCTION AND PROMOTION OF
THE CONQUESTS OF MEXICO TRILOGY
BY GEORGE SZANTO**

by

Cynthia Jane Cecil
B.A., University of Victoria, 1998
M.A., University of Victoria, 2003

Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF PUBLISHING

in the Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences
Master of Publishing Program

© Cynthia Jane Cecil 2005

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Summer 2005

All rights reserved. This work may not be reproduced in whole or in part, by photocopy or other means, without permission of the author.

APPROVAL

Name: Cynthia Jane Cecil

Degree: Master of Publishing

Title of Project: The Production and Promotion of
The Conquests of Mexico Trilogy
by George Szanto

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Rowland Lorimer, Senior Supervisor
Director, Master of Publishing Program
Simon Fraser University

Dr. Carole Gerson, Supervisor
Professor, Department of English
Simon Fraser University

Rhonda Bailey, Industry Supervisor
Editorial Director, XYZ Publishing

Date approved:

August 10, 2005

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY



PARTIAL COPYRIGHT LICENCE

The author, whose copyright is declared on the title page of this work, has granted to Simon Fraser University the right to lend this thesis, project or extended essay to users of the Simon Fraser University Library, and to make partial or single copies only for such users or in response to a request from the library of any other university, or other educational institution, on its own behalf or for one of its users.

The author has further granted permission to Simon Fraser University to keep or make a digital copy for use in its circulating collection.

The author has further agreed that permission for multiple copying of this work for scholarly purposes may be granted by either the author or the Dean of Graduate Studies.

It is understood that copying or publication of this work for financial gain shall not be allowed without the author's written permission.\

Permission for public performance, or limited permission for private scholarly use, of any multimedia materials forming part of this work, may have been granted by the author. This information may be found on the separately catalogued multimedia material and in the signed Partial Copyright Licence.

The original Partial Copyright Licence attesting to these terms, and signed by this author, may be found in the original bound copy of this work, retained in the Simon Fraser University Archive.

W. A. C. Bennett Library
Simon Fraser University
Burnaby, BC, Canada

ABSTRACT

This project report is based on a case study of the publication and marketing by XYZ Publishing of three novels by Canadian author George Szanto. XYZ is a bilingual press based in Montréal that acquired the rights to Szanto's three novels (two previously published), with the intention of marketing the three as a trilogy, **The Conquests of Mexico**. The report follows the publication and promotion of the trilogy, from the acquisition of each of the three titles, to the editorial challenges associated with the production of a trilogy, to the marketing and promotion of a successful publishing project. The creative challenges inherent in this publishing project effectively demonstrate and highlight current industry practices, in particular the editorial and marketing process, and further serve to define a new direction in Canadian publishing, which is linked in very important ways to a new direction in Canadian identity.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am grateful to have had the benefit of a great deal of support and encouragement during the writing of this report. I would like to acknowledge my indebtedness to Carole Gerson for her careful reading and helpful suggestions, Rowland Lorimer, whose critical acumen made me think more rigorously, and Rhonda Bailey, whose encouragement and advice sustained me through various stages in the writing of this study. I am especially grateful to George Szanto for writing **The Conquests of Mexico** and to André Vanasse for publishing it. For helping in ways too numerous to be mentioned here, I want to thank my friends Carol Windley and Diane Shortt. Finally, I offer to my sons, Patrick and Wesley, an appreciation beyond words.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Approval page</i>	<i>ii</i>
<i>Abstract</i>	<i>iii</i>
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	<i>iv</i>
<i>Table of Contents</i>	<i>v</i>
<i>Preface</i>	<i>vi</i>
Introduction	1
PART I: The Acquisition	4
An International Author.....	4
Publishing History of the Books.....	8
The Agent and The Contract.....	9
XYZ Publishing and The Project.....	9
Role of Translation.....	12
PART II: Editorial Development and Design	15
Manuscript Preparation.....	16
Editing Canadian Style.....	17
The Detective: Copyediting.....	19
The Expert Eye: Proofreading.....	26
The Final Copy.....	28
PART III: Marketing and Promotion	29
Tools of the Trade.....	30
Media with a Mandate on Canadian Literature.....	34
Dollars That Make Sense: Funding Promotion.....	40
The Book Tour.....	43
A Breakthrough: The Joy Read Project.....	48
PART IV: Conclusion	52
References	54
Appendices	56
Appendix A: <i>Second Sight</i> Press Release.....	56
Appendix B: Cover design for <i>The Condesa of M.</i>	57
Appendix C: <i>Vancouver Sun</i> review of <i>Second Sight</i>	58
Appendix D: LPG Joy Read Project ads.....	59
Appendix E: Bolen Books Poster.....	61

PREFACE

While manuscript preparation and the research and development of a comprehensive promotion plan for **The Conquests of Mexico** is the primary focus of this report, I also look closely at the challenge of publishing in Canada a writer with an international readership and reputation such as George Szanto. This challenge, while exciting for publisher and author, does generate the need for a specialized approach in preparing the manuscripts and, subsequently, in promoting the author's work.

In addition to addressing the unique requirements of editing for the Canadian market, I look at the continually evolving nature of Canadian literature, funding mandates in publishing, and the critical and popular reception in Canada of Canadian authors who are internationally published. Analysis of this reception will include media response to Canadian writers and the role of the media in promoting books and authors—all subjects related to the practical issues worked on in the implementation of a promotion plan and my interest and education in Canadian literature.

XYZ is a bilingual literary press publishing in English as XYZ Publishing and in French as XYZ éditeur. As this study shows, XYZ Publishing demonstrated entrepreneurial vision as well as literary vision in its decision to reprint two previously published novels along with the first edition of another novel to be launched as the trilogy **The Conquests of Mexico** in their Tidelines fiction series. My role in the project was to act as editorial and marketing associate to Rhonda Bailey, Editorial Director, whose creative energy spearheaded the project.

In addition to the practical experience of my involvement with the project, relevant information from book industry publications, such as *Quill & Quire*, numerous

reviews and feature articles on George Szanto and his work, as well as reference to supplemental sources such as Stephen Henighan's *When Words Deny The World: The Reshaping of Canadian Writing* and Robert Wright's *Hip and Trivial: Youth Culture, Book Publishing and the Greying of Canadian Nationalism*, inform my critical vision.

**THE PRODUCTION AND PROMOTION OF
THE CONQUESTS OF MEXICO TRILOGY
BY GEORGE SZANTO**

INTRODUCTION

XYZ's profile as a bilingual press provided a rare opportunity for the trilogy **The Conquests of Mexico by George Szanto** to be published in Canada in both French and English. French-language and English-language publishers who routinely buy translation rights in order to expand their business opportunities have long published titles in translation with great success. For example, McClelland & Stewart published thirteen of Gabrielle Roy's books in translation. Roy's first novel, *Bonheur d'occasion*, had been a critical and commercial success on publication in Montreal. Published as *The Tin Flute*, M&S's English version of Roy's novel sold 14,000 copies and received the Governor General's Award for Fiction. In Vancouver, Talon Books, which also published Quebec authors in translation, became Michel Tremblay's English-language publisher for both drama and fiction. The selling of translation rights between French-language and English-language publishers is a common practice in Canadian publishing.

In a strategic move, XYZ acquired both Canadian English rights and French translation rights to George Szanto's novels with the intention of marketing the three as a trilogy in both official languages and thereby expanding its business opportunities into a regional and a national market in a way that other Canadian publishers have not. In a country too often divided by region and language, XYZ's decision to release the trilogy in English and French constituted an innovative and inclusive approach, bringing together in a significant way Canada's "two solitudes." With George Szanto's trilogy, XYZ saw a

clear opportunity to take a new and exciting direction in Canadian publishing and, at the same time, articulate a distinct cultural existence for Canada. In Part I of this report, the acquisition of the three books is discussed. First, the contribution the author makes to a publishing project is considered, along with the publishing history of the books.

Secondly, XYZ 's background and the aims of the publisher are examined, with a close look at the role of translation and language in XYZ' s acquisition and editorial development of **The Conquests of Mexico**.

Production is a collaborative process between the author, editor, copyeditor, proofreader and typesetter. As Mary Stoughton notes in *Substance & Style*, in the production process it is important to know how each participant's role fits into the larger picture of editorial development and design. This understanding makes each person's task more relevant so that "everyone works together to produce a harmonious whole" (3).

Part II follows a timeline of the copyediting and proofreading process, not only to contribute to an understanding of these specific editorial roles, but also to demonstrate the collaboration between author, editor, and typesetter in producing *The Condesa of M.*, the third and final book to complete the trilogy. The process of preparing a manuscript for publication requires knowledge of and adherence to the publisher's editorial vision and house style, while at the same time keeping in mind the future alignment of this work with the proposed marketing concept and overall design. In addition to providing a detailed account of the editorial functions of copyediting and proofreading *The Condesa of M.*, Part II demonstrates the implementation of a distinct editorial style and marketing concept in the manuscript preparation and design of all three books in **The Conquests of Mexico** trilogy.

In *Basic Marketing: a Global Managerial Approach*, a marketing plan is described as an integrated strategy of price, placement, production, and promotion of a product to a target customer—commonly referred to as the four P’s of a marketing mix (Shapiro, 34). The production and promotion of a product, two of the above-mentioned four P’s, are examined in this report. The pricing and placement (which involves the channel of distribution) of the trilogy are decisions and activities conducted outside the parameters of this report and therefore are not discussed in any detail. The need for a well-defined and effective marketing plan is, of course, a business reality of publishing **The Conquests of Mexico**. While XYZ’s status as a bilingual publisher made it feasible to publish **The Conquests of Mexico** in both official languages, publishing two previously published books could prove to be an uncertain enterprise and this had to be carefully considered and taken into account. XYZ’s response to the risk was to formulate a marketing plan from the beginning of the acquisition phase of all three titles, and then to adhere to this plan through the editing process of the entire trilogy. The undertaking of the promotion of **The Conquests of Mexico** as both a regional and national campaign touched on several areas of significance related to the Canadian book trade that are examined in this report. In Part III, the promotion of the trilogy, or “telling and selling the customer (Shapiro, 36) is examined. First, an analysis of promotional materials and resources as key elements of a marketing campaign is introduced. Second, the role of media and popular reception and the evolving nature of Canadian literature is discussed, followed by an analysis of the critical aspects of funding promotion, including the specific challenges of the book tour, and the success of a national marketing campaign in promoting Canadian publishing.

PART 1: THE ACQUISITION

AN INTERNATIONAL AUTHOR

This project report begins with an introduction to the author, George Szanto, who has participated as a significant contributor to the project of publishing and marketing his trilogy **The Conquests of Mexico**. It is important to highlight the biographical and professional accomplishments of George Szanto in order to give a sense of what details and background information are considered and given prominence in presenting a book to sales representatives, booksellers, book buyers, festival coordinators, advertisers and the reviewers—the same details, generally speaking, a publisher and editor consider in acquiring a book title for publication. The author often becomes a commodity in the marketing plan. An author's history, interests and accomplishments have a measurable effect on the success of a publishing project and are taken under serious consideration by the publisher and editor.

The following biographical information was provided by George Szanto to help promote **The Conquests of Mexico**.

GEORGE SZANTO is the author of a dozen books—novels, stories, plays and essays.

George Szanto's first novel, *Not Working* (1982) is the story of a big city Jewish cop turned rural househusband. Two collections of short stories, *Sixteen Ways to Skin a Cat* (1978), and *Duets* (1989), try to bring some anarchy to an overly structured universe. *Friends & Marriages* (1995) follows several interconnected characters over two decades. *The Underside of Stones* (1990; reprint 2004), part one of the trilogy **The Conquests of Mexico**, is the story of a Canadian who lives a year in Mexico and finds his life and beliefs progressively subverted and reconstituted; part two, *Second Sight* (2004), exposes the realms of

Mexican wealth and politics; part three, *The Condesa of M.* (2001; reprint 2005), explores Mexico's darker religious underworld;

The Canadian edition of *Not Working* was cited by *Books in Canada* as one of the five best first novels of 1982. One segment of *The Underside of Stones*, "How Ali Cran Got His Name," won a National Magazine Award in 1988. *Friends & Marriages* won the Hugh MacLennan Prize for Fiction for 1995. A French translation of *Stones* appeared in 1997 as *La face cachée des pierres* and in 1999 in Italian as *La faccia nascosta delle pietre*. A French translation of *The Condesa of M.* was published in 2004 as *La Condesa María Victoria*, and *Second Sight* will appear in late 2005 as *Deuxième vue*.

Szanto's books of essays and criticism include *Inside the Statues of Saints* (1996) which explores Mexican life through profiles of contemporary Mexican writers. *Narrative Consciousness* (1971), *Theater and Propaganda* (1978), and *Narrative Taste: The Matter of Quality* (1987), examine writers past and present who subvert commonplace perceptions of everyday life. His plays, which include *The New Black Crook* (1971), *The Great Chinchilla War* (1973), *The Next Move* (1981), and *Before It Gets Better* (1985), also attempt to overturn the familiar.

Szanto was born in 1940 in Derry, Northern Ireland, the son of Viennese refugees who, the year before, had fled Hitler and anti-Semitism. He grew up in Ireland, England, and later New Hampshire in the United States. He attended Dartmouth College, Goethe Universität in Frankfurt/Main, Université d'Aix-en-Provence, and Harvard University. He received his doctorate from Harvard University in 1967. He has taught at Harvard, at the University California, San Diego, and for twenty-six years at McGill University where, in 2000, he was named professor emeritus. He was made a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada in 1988.

Szanto's achievements, as listed above, serve well to illustrate his credibility as a professional writer and accomplished academic, information that can be compiled into marketing material to generate interest. George Szanto's complete curriculum vitae reveal an extensive list of professional accomplishments. George Szanto's education and professionalism (for example, his specialization in cultural studies and comparative literature) gives emphasis to his ability to look at other cultures with insight from an informed Canadian point of view.

It seems quite accurate to characterize George Szanto as an individual with a diverse and varied personal, educational and literary history. He is a Canadian author whose critical and fictional boundaries extend beyond Canada and encompass cultural traditions and foreign landscapes. In Derek Weiler's article "Writing from Away," in which the author examines the reception of Canadian expatriate authors in Canada, he notes that because of their engagement with language and landscape "Canadians have a lot of understanding of the history of other countries as well as their own" (Weiler, p. 10). George Szanto chose Michoacán, a rural state in west-central Mexico, as a place to live and write in 1985 and the trilogy **Conquests of Mexico** was born. We have only to consider writers such as the expatriate Mavis Gallant and Ottawa-born Norman Levine to recognize that this situation is not unique, but at the same time it undeniably presents certain challenges in terms of marketing and publicity.

In Szanto's writing we recognize his self-described attempt "to overturn the familiar" in his writing. Although different in narrative approach (though their setting remains the same and characters reappear, each book is a fully separate story), all three novels expose the cultural, political and religious underpinnings of the Mexican culture and by doing so challenge the identity or "truth" of the Canadian hero of the stories, as his beliefs are "progressively subverted and reconstituted." Uncertainty and truth are central elements of George Szanto's fiction. An influential essay written by Szanto speaks to his underlying philosophy that there are "no absolutes" (interview, Nanaimo, February 3, 2005).

Titled "Truth and Storytelling" the essay, published in *Textual Studies in Canada* (Issue 16, 2002), was presented as a conference paper at the University College of the

Cariboo in Kamloops, British Columbia in February 2001. As this project report later details, the University College of the Cariboo became an important aspect of the marketing plan for the trilogy in 2004. And in 2005, the essay again influenced the marketing plan by providing the theme “Truth and Storytelling” for the RAW Exchange Reading Series held at the Vancouver Public Library on January 19, 2005—a suggestion made by Rhonda Bailey to the director of the series.

Critical reviews of Szanto’s first publication of *The Underside of Stones* (1990) and *The Condesa of M.* (2001) praise Szanto for his writing of a Canadian hero who comes to question his identity in an unfamiliar terrain. In *The Globe and Mail*, in a review of the original hardcover publication of *The Underside of Stones*, Alberto Manguel wrote: “Uncertainty, more than anything else, lends Szanto’s voice its ring of truth. His narrator admits ignorance and confusion, but also admiration, respect and skeptical wonder” (Manguel, p. D-1). The XYZ Publishing catalogue and promotional copy for all three books in **The Conquests of Mexico** quotes Timothy Findley from a letter he wrote to the publisher at McClelland & Stewart: “Surely Szanto’s time has finally come.” Findley’s comment refers to the reception of a Canadian audience to Szanto’s writing. Convincing the Canadian media, booksellers, and, ultimately, Canadian readers that Findley may be right became the task of the publisher’s marketing plan. As this project report later details, the marketing of **The Conquests of Mexico** faced its own set of challenges in identifying Canadian literature and promoting its reception.

PUBLISHING HISTORY OF THE BOOKS

The Underside of Stones, a selection of short stories written during a stay in Mexico in 1985/86 and organized as a novel, was first published in the United States by HarperCollins (New York, 1990), and later published in Canada by McClelland & Stewart (Toronto, 1990). A French translation of *The Underside of Stones* appeared in 1997 as *La face cachée des pierres* translated by François Barcelo (XYZ éditeur: Montréal) and in 1999 in Italian as *La faccia nascosta delle pietre* translated by Maria Luisa Lango (Vecchiarelli Editore: Rome).

Second Sight is the second book of the trilogy, a “detective” story written in 1996 (pre-NAFTA) that explores the dark side of Mexico’s politics, but because of the political climate in Mexico at the time, Szanto withheld its publication. In 2004, XYZ Publishing released the first edition of *Second Sight* in trade paperback. *Second Sight* will appear in late 2005 as *Deuxième vue* (XYZ éditeur: Montréal).

The Condesa of M., the third book of the trilogy, a story that weaves the historical with the present-day, was first published in hardcover in 2001 by Cormorant Books (Toronto). A French translation of *The Condesa of M.* was published in 2004 as *La Condesa Maria Victoria* (XYZ éditeur: Montréal), and recently released (2005) as a new trade paperback by XYZ Publishing to complete the trilogy **The Conquests of Mexico**.

How did three books written chronologically, books one and three being previously published eleven years apart, become the trilogy **The Conquests of Mexico**?

THE AGENT AND THE CONTRACT

On the acknowledgements page of the 2005 publication of *The Condesa of M.*, Szanto writes: “Finally, a word of great thanks to XYZ Publishing in the persons of André Vanasse and Rhonda Bailey, who have given proper shape to my trilogy, *The Conquests of Mexico*; and to my agent Sally Harding, literary matchmaker supreme” (p. v).

Szanto’s comments reveal a wish fulfilled. Withholding *Second Sight* from publication for several years and having a publishing history with eleven years between the publishing of *The Underside of Stones* and *The Condesa of M.* meant that the concept of a trilogy remained unrealized until the time that XYZ Publishing negotiated a deal with Szanto’s agent to give the trilogy, in George’s words, the “proper shape.”

XYZ PUBLISHING AND THE PROJECT

Matching the right publisher to George Szanto’s trilogy **The Conquests of Mexico**, to be published in both French and English, inevitably led to a deal with XYZ Publishing. The French translation of *The Underside of Stones* had been published by XYZ éditeur in 1997, and the French translation of *The Condesa of M.* was planned for publication in 2004. XYZ’s profile as a successful bilingual Canadian literary press is the perfect fit for the trilogy and for the aims of both the author and the publisher.

XYZ éditeur was founded in 1985 by Gaëtan Levesque and Maurice Soudeyns in Montréal, Quebec. In 1990 André Vanasse became co-owner with Gaëtan Levesque and the company enlarged its mandate to increase production. It now has nearly 400 titles in print. XYZ publishes novels, essays, biographies and, occasionally, books on tourism, restaurants and winemaking. Considered one of the three most distinguished literary

publishing houses in Quebec, XYZ éditeur has always pursued an editorial policy of excellence. Authors published by XYZ éditeur have won the most prestigious literary prizes in Quebec and Canada, and over 30 XYZ titles have been translated into other languages. Some authors of note on XYZ éditeur's list are Roch Carrier, Sergio Kokis and Yann Martel, winner of the 2002 Man Booker prize for *The Life of Pi*, now published by XYZ éditeur as *L'histoire de Pi*.

In 1999, XYZ éditeur began publishing books in English as XYZ Publishing with the introduction of The Quest Library, a new series of biographies for young readers. XYZ's decision to publish in English can be attributed to both a shrinking Quebec market and an editorial vision. XYZ's growth as a publisher faced a ceiling in the francophone market, and that growth demanded XYZ look elsewhere. The Quest Library is a part of that yet is also part of an editorial mandate to spearhead an interest in history in young Canadians. In André Vanasse's point of view, the English market "was waiting for that kind of series" as a counterpoint to popular culture. In 1998 at a CBA (Canadian Booksellers Association) trade show Rhonda Bailey, a former partner in Oolichan Books, was approached by André Vanasse to act as Editorial Director of English-language publications. Rhonda accepted the position and continues to work from her editorial office located in Lantzville, British Columbia. The new venture was profiled in *Quill & Quire* in June 1999 (Soderstrom, 1999, p.17).

The Quest Library, a complement to XYZ éditeur's very successful biography series *Les grandes figures*, was the genesis of an English-language imprint that would come to include the Tidelines fiction series in 2000. Through Rhonda Bailey's keen stewardship, The Quest Library now boasts twenty original titles and five translated titles

(selling more copies than the French series) and is informed by a desire of the publishers to enter the educational market. XYZ Publishing began the Tidelines fiction series with three translated titles, one of which was nominated as a finalist for the 2002 Governor General's Award for Translation (*Larry Volt* by Pierre Tourangeau, translated by Lazar Lederhendler). It continues to build on an impressive Canadian-authored literary fiction list.

Often the location of a firm or the language of operation determines the identity of that firm in one or other of the official languages (Lorimer, p.113). The accomplished French-language publishing industry centred in Quebec, of which XYZ éditeur is part of, differs in both culture and economics from the English-language trade publishers and publishing. Although the editorial office of XYZ Publishing operates in British Columbia and publishes many BC authors, XYZ Publishing is not eligible for BC provincial funding and must rely on shared provincial support from the Quebec government with XYZ éditeur. In fact, the copyright page of *The Condesa of M.* acknowledges Quebec funding bodies for their support (the ministère de la Culture et des Communications du Québec and the Société de développement des entreprise culturelles). Similarly, Canada Council funding for book promotion is calculated on a shared basis. Both XYZ Publishing and XYZ éditeur have the advantages made available to all Canadian publishers, such as funding for translation. Initially, funding for XYZ Publishing was secured through a repayable loan received by the company to explore the English-language market.

The cooperative efforts of XYZ Publishing and XYZ éditeur forged a new venture to compete in the Canadian publishing market. Publishing is a high-risk, low-margin

business conducted in a highly competitive market where publishers, both large and small, compete for authors, media attention and retail space. To make a book successful the publisher needs to get all the fundamentals right: from the choice of manuscripts and cover designs and marketing strategies to the decision of how many copies to print. André Vanasse and Rhonda Bailey have met this challenge with both passion and professionalism for the reward of publishing books that matter to them and to their shared literary vision.

ROLE OF TRANSLATION

Although the French publication of the trilogy is not the focus of this report, language, and translation in particular, played a significant part in the acquisition and publication of Szanto's novels. Szanto's Canadian sensibility embraces both French and English and extends itself to the North American NAFTA link with Mexico and the Spanish language. In fact, Szanto promoted the new release of *Second Sight* at WOTS (Word on the Street) in Vancouver in the "VanCity Voices" multicultural tent, and was asked to present in English, French and Spanish.

At the 2002 Guadalajara International Book Fair in Mexico Maria Luisa Armendarz Guerra, the fair's director general, was quoted as saying, "Québécois are the Latinos of the North" (Soderstrom, 2002, p. 6). There was a strong Canadian presence at the 2002 fair which featured an anthology of Canadian literature that had been translated into Spanish (Margaret Atwood, Austin Clarke and Alistair MacLeod attended). In 2003, Quebec was a featured region at the fair and both André Vanasse and George Szanto attended, and made promising contacts to sell into a foreign market. Maria Luisa's

observation can be read as a comment on both cultural marginalization and assimilation, yet her observation also gives voice to a philosophy of language that has influenced a North American editorial vision of “a language for the Americas”—an editorial vision adopted by XYZ Publishing, in consultation with the author, and applied to the editorial development of **The Conquests of Mexico** trilogy.

The views of Stephen Henighan in his essay “A Language for the Americas” are consistent with XYZ’s editorial decision to integrate North American languages as part of a Canadian text in producing the trilogy. XYZ’s editorial vision, and the preferences of the author or translator, resulted in the adoption of a “house style” for several books in the Tidelines fiction series. That style no longer italicized foreign words, as is commonly practised. One of the Tidelines books, *Damselfish* by Susan Ouriou (2003), is also set in Mexico and was nominated as a finalist for both the Alberta Book Prizes Georges Bugnet Award and the W.O. Mitchell Book Prize. XYZ Publishing also adopted a house style of consistent Canadian spellings for a Canadian audience (XYZ does not hold the U.S. rights to George Szanto’s **Conquests of Mexico** trilogy), a significant departure from the trend of many Canadian publishers in their vigorous pursuit of the American market.

Henighan encourages Canadian writers to elaborate a literary language that “mediates the experience of the other solitude” (p. 81): “If Latino writers can develop a language that mediates vigorously between English and Spanish ... little should prevent Canadian writers from evolving a similar go-between idiom expressing the interpenetration of English and French realities. From our fuller engagement with *all* [original emphasis] of the Americas the great Canadian Novel may yet emerge” (p. 82).

As a bilingual publisher, XYZ exemplifies the cooperative and culturally significant publishing that Henighan claims may one day produce the Great Canadian Novel.

The following story of how *The Underside of Stones* first came to be in the hands of XYZ, as related by George Szanto, illustrates how many book deals come to be: how the ability to recognize and act on a presented opportunity can benefit both author and publisher, as well as provide the groundwork for a very workable book deal. In 1995, Szanto participated on a Quebec literary jury where he met Quebec poet and novelist François Barcelo. After a few meetings with Barcelo that can only be described as serendipitous, Szanto was presented with a fully translated first chapter from *The Underside of Stones* and was overwhelmed with its accuracy and sensibility. Impressed by Szanto's writing, Barcelo had translated the first chapter for his French-language wife to read on a creative impulse—something he had never done before. Barcelo subsequently gave a copy to André Vanasse, for whom he worked as a translator, and this led to a lunch meeting between Szanto and Vanasse and an offer to publish the trilogy. Sally Harding negotiated the deal and the trilogy was born. What Szanto describes “siblings,” in the form of three individual but related novels, were united. Successfully matching an author to a publisher is clearly an important starting point for a positive outcome.

A presented opportunity to publish Szanto's work is again demonstrated by the publication of the Italian translation of *The Underside of Stones*, a project mediated by one of Szanto's former students, an Italian woman who introduced his work to an Italian publisher. The result was the 1999 publication of *La faccia nascosta delle pietre*

translated by Maria Luisa Lango (Vecchiarelli Editore: Rome). A launch of the book was held in a villa in Tuscany where 150 people attended a supper that included a whole roasted pig and plenty of wine, followed by an evening of speakers offering literary criticism on the book, glowing speeches and a party that lasted thirty-six hours.

PART II: EDITORIAL DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN

Editing is both an art and a craft. It may call variously for inspiration, patience and an infinite capacity for detail—or a measure of each

- Editors' Association of Canada,

(EAC/arc, *Professional Editorial Standards: Revised Edition*, 2000, p.5)

XYZ Publishing's decision to publish all three novels by George Szanto as a trilogy posed a significant challenge: before XYZ agreed to publish *The Underside of Stones* (the first book in **The Conquests of Mexico**) it had to be established that XYZ's publication would be an eligible title as a new format reprint under Canada Council's funding mandate. *The Condesa of M.* would have to meet the same requirements. The plan was to have all three novels made available in trade paperback, with all three in print and on the shelves of bookstores by the end of February 2005. This obviously would require stringent adherence to an editing timeline, and as Rhonda Bailey remarked in referring to the publication of *The Underside of Stones*: "editing a trilogy always poses a challenge in terms of creating and maintaining a consistent editorial style, and particularly so in this case, when the first book of the three was first published fifteen years ago."

XYZ Publishing added significant value to *The Underside of Stones* both through editing and through format changes. The original edition published in 1990 by McClelland and Stewart was in hardcover with a sewn binding. XYZ's edition is a perfect bound trade paperback with French flaps, typeset in a completely new layout in keeping with the Tidelines fiction series, with a new cover design and new cover text. The same format is used for all three books in **The Conquests of Mexico**. Rhonda Bailey took digital photographs of Mexican masks from George Szanto's mask collection, and these were incorporated in the cover designs for each book in the trilogy, beginning with *The Underside of Stones*.

Beginning with the XYZ 2004 edition of *The Underside of Stones*, re-edited and in a new format, the novels in George Szanto's trilogy **The Conquests of Mexico** were produced with great care, achieving a consistent editorial style and design for all three.

MANUSCRIPT PREPARATION

Manuscript preparation begins after the author has submitted a finished manuscript, and involves an editorial process of substantive, structural and stylistic editing, after which copyediting and proofreading is done before printing. Substantive or structural editing often necessitates reorganizing the material, suggesting deletions, additions, or rearrangements if appropriate. A substantive edit was not required in editing the *The Condesa of M*. The focus of the discussion here is on copyediting style—style choices made by the editor, Rhonda Bailey, to give consistency to the three separate texts that make up **The Conquests of Mexico** trilogy—and the copyediting and proofreading process.

As a new format reprint *The Underside of Stones* qualified for Canada Council funding and established the copyediting style for the entire trilogy, serving as a guideline in the manuscript preparation for all three novels. XYZ did not have the benefit of using a scanned version of the text already edited for the McClelland & Stewart edition. XYZ's decision was to start with the author's typed manuscript and edit afresh. Before the manuscript was copyedited, the author entered some revisions to the digital file of his original text from 1990. In consultation with the author, measurements were changed from imperial to metric with appropriate re-wordings except for a couple of exceptions where metric wording did not seem appropriate to either the author or editor. XYZ Publishing did not have U.S. rights to Szanto's novels, and so in keeping with house style, adopted consistent Canadian spellings; the original M&S edition had a mix of American and Canadian spellings. Changes to spellings were noted on the editorial style sheet in order to make *The Underside of Stones* consistent with Szanto's new novel, *Second Sight*, published at the same time. During the editing process the author updated some words to reflect current times.

The editorial development of *The Underside of Stones* led to a copyediting style that was the basis to the formation of **The Conquests of Mexico** as an integrated trilogy. For example, the god "Chac Mool's" name, which was inconsistently spelled in the original edition of *The Underside of Stones*, was spelled consistently as written here.

EDITING CANADIAN STYLE.

The copyediting style developed for the trilogy was meant to reflect XYZ Publishing's editorial mandate to write "Canadian." The style required sorting out differences between

British and American editorial style and language use. Cragg (2000, p.16) describes such a style in *Editing Canadian English* as “a hybrid of English that derives from two spelling traditions.” While replacing American spelling with British, as in *favorite* with *favourite* and *center* with *centre* most publishers, including XYZ Publishing, follow the American style for punctuation, which always places the period or comma inside the closing double quotation marks, where British style usage places the punctuation outside single quotation marks. XYZ Publishing’s goal is not to impose a uniform Canadian style, but to make informed and appropriate choices for each project. In George Szanto’s trilogy **The Conquests of Mexico**, the added challenge of maintaining the integrity of the Spanish language became part of the editing process.

Given its history of being first published for an American audience, *The Underside of Stones* required a close editorial eye to adapt the writing for a Canadian audience. In *The Condesa of M.* there also seemed to be an idiosyncratic use of American and Canadian spellings that required careful attention to achieve consistency, and to respect the author’s preferred usage. *The Canadian Oxford Dictionary* and *CP Caps and Spelling*, a Canadian style guide, were followed whenever possible. Oftentimes, however, the author’s fondness for compound words (closed, open and hyphenated)), like *hellhole*, *goat meat* and *work-pants*, required other sources, such as the *ITP Nelson Canadian Dictionary of the English Language*. Consistent treatment for signs, slogans, headlines, and posters followed *The Chicago Manual of Style*. Another house style choice is required for the use of ellipses. XYZ adopted the French style; three points followed by a letter space at all times, for example, “Sí, señor. But...” (*Condesa*, 2005, p.108) and, “Arms legs wide to slow... A slow, slow fall” (*Condesa*, 2005, p. 244). The first

example illustrates the attention paid to accents and spelling of Spanish words in the editing of the manuscript (note: foreign words are not italicized); the second example illustrates the author's writing style. The author's idiosyncratic and frequent use of the em dash was adhered to as a copyediting style choice as in: "Drink, my beautiful—Rissa. We have so—few years, we must drink." (*Condesa*, 2005, p. 213)

The Condesa of M. posed a specific copyediting challenge in that the novel is written in sections, some in eighteenth-century and other in contemporary time. In the eighteenth-century sections of *The Condesa of M.* the metric was not used, as it had not yet been invented.

THE DETECTIVE: COPYEDITING

(July 29 to September 7, 2004)

Copyediting involves reviewing a finished manuscript (copy) in a line-by-line reading of the manuscript to examine spelling, grammar, punctuation, consistency and conformity to style. A copyeditor is required to pay close attention to every detail in the manuscript, to have a thorough knowledge of what to look for and the style to be followed, and to demonstrate the ability to negotiate copyediting changes to the manuscript tactfully. A copyeditor must also demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the accepted symbols to mark copy for correction, so that the author can clearly read suggestions and understand revisions at a glance. More importantly, the role of the copyeditor is to avoid editorial inconsistencies that may be distracting from the content and "at worst cloud the author's meaning" (Stoughton, 2).

July 26—Both a paper manuscript and an MS Word file of *The Condesa of M.* were used to begin copyediting. The editing was done first on the paper manuscript (Draft 1); after that, the author approved the corrections. It would be a month before corrections could be entered and a Word file prepared for layout. The first step in copyediting *The Condesa of M.* was to begin to develop a style sheet to maintain the style choices made for the previous two books.

In preparing a style sheet for *The Condesa of M.*, a first reading of the paper copy was done to determine the author's preferred spelling of names, place names, hyphenation and compound words, acronyms, foreign words, and commercial names (such as Walkman), American and Canadian spellings, capitalization and measurements, as they first appeared in the manuscript, noting page numbers, and marking each place in the manuscript that required a query with a Post-it note—deviations in names and place names and any possible information that might contradict something that occurred in the first two novels. The newly compiled list was checked against the style sheets for the previous two books of the trilogy. When the draft of a style sheet was complete it was then transferred to a Word file with a typed list sorted alphabetically into two columns per page. Each of the style sheets for the three books contained an average of two hundred words, or three pages, with some words repeated.

With style sheets for all three books to consult and follow along with *The Canadian Oxford Dictionary* and *CP Caps and Spelling*, a copyediting checklist, and the hardcover Cormorant edition of *The Condesa of M.* (2001), a careful review of the manuscript (Draft 1) was done, noting corrections. Changes were clearly entered on the manuscript using standard copyediting marks. Comments and questions were made in

pencil in the margins and tagged with yellow Post-it notes. Notes were also made on a separate note pad.

Copyediting requires developing a consistent style for writing mechanics such as ellipses, dashes, and section breaks. Before copyediting, a “Search and Replace” was done to change the author’s two spaces after each period to one. The aim was to check ellipses and ensure they followed XYZ house style, to check that there was no indentation after section breaks and the beginning of new chapters, and to make sure dashes were em dashes. Dashes were marked exactly as the author had originally created them, with a space following or not. A later decision was made not to change the em dashes during copyediting where errors could easily be made. The production department in Montréal entered the changes to the final layout in Quark Xpress. That way, Szanto’s idiosyncratic spacing around the dashes was preserved.

The Condesa of M. is a tale within a tale. The contemporary story of Jorge and his family is layered in sections with the story of the condesa, María Victoria Cervants y Gazoponda, an eighteenth-century woman with an extraordinary story. A choice was made in the copyedit to mark the time shifts with X’s and O’s to differentiate the contemporary from the past so that two different dingbats could be selected for the design. Where imperial measurements were found in the contemporary sections, the phrase to be changed was circled and the choice of new wording was left to the author.

August 20—After copyediting (Draft 1) was finished, a list of queries was sent to the author. These questions were designed to seek clarification on a number of inconsistencies, for example, throughout the manuscript “Sierra Madre” has a capitalized M, yet the style sheets for the other novels suggested lower case (Sierra madre). Szanto

confirmed in his response to a query about this inconsistency that “Sierra Madre” should be capitalized. A little detective work disclosed how the error on the style sheet came to be, illustrating several aspects of the copyediting process: the effectiveness of a style sheet, which in this case cast a red herring because “Sierra madre” is correctly spelled in the published books; the importance of keeping a detailed record of queries for consultation with both the author and the editor in the copyediting process; and the importance of following up on all queries to ensure clarification and consistency.

Another anomaly in the manuscript was the alternate spelling of “Tierra Caliente,” either capitalized or spelled in lower case as “tierra caliente” throughout the manuscript. The style sheets for the first two novels suggested lower case only. Technically, capitalizing tierra caliente is not incorrect; however, using lower case is an example of a copyediting style choice agreed to by both the author and editor. The author had used both.

During the copyediting process, attention to such matters of detail can become an obsession for both the copyeditor and author. Ideally, as Stoughton notes, “authors and editors complement each other, each striving to produce the perfect manuscript” (Stoughton, 1). For example, copyediting revealed only one instance where the only time monetary value was not spelled out in the manuscript—“\$190 worth of presents” (Draft 1, page 14), rather than one-hundred-and-ninety dollars worth of presents. A query was sent to the author who asked that the amount be spelled out in full. In a similar way, it was revealed that when Jorge (the protagonist) asks the priest he presumably meets for the first time where he acquired his knowledge of German, the priest replies: “Freiburg. Three years of seminary” (Draft I, page 181). A parallel character or the same one saying

the same thing about his knowledge of German had been written in *The Underside of Stones*. A query was sent to the author, asking if there was a conflict in chronology or fact. He replied in an e-mail, “I just checked this—it is Pepe, who spent three years in Strasburg not Freiburg. But you are right, the three years in German is a bit of a coincidence. Make it four. How to alter history...” (August 21). This example is an important point in terms of publishing a trilogy where chronology and fact need to be consistent not just in one book, but in all three books. The author also acknowledged that he “knew a couple of other changes that should be made to the *Condesa* manuscript. Pianola is the wrong word, throughout. A pianola is a player piano. It should be replaced by harpsichord” (e-mail, August 21). Szanto provided an important detail that would have been overlooked during copyediting without his careful reading and collaboration.

August 24—After corrections and edit changes were approved, they were then entered to the MS Word digital file (Draft 2) in preparation for layout. In a traditional edit, the marked paper manuscript (Draft 1) is given to the author so that he can see the changes made in copyediting, and then enter his own corrections, printed clearly on the manuscript. That way, there is a paper trail, a final text for layout. A final edited paper manuscript of *The Condesa of M.* was also needed for the XYZ Publishing archives. Options were to send the author the paper manuscript as an Xpresspost package to his home on Gabriola Island, or to arrange to meet him in Nanaimo, or to e-mail the edited document to him for print out.

Editors need to understand the advantages computers offer while being aware of the limitations and changes technology imposes: if the document was sent to Szanto by e-mail, he would need to send a separate list of his changes to enter into the manuscript in

order to be sure a permanent record, or paper trail, of his revision existed. Had “Track Changes” been used to edit, as is now commonly practiced, Szanto would have been able to see editing changes on the digital file (Draft 2), a less complicated solution. Unfortunately, Szanto works in Word Perfect and would not be able to see work edited using Track Changes. An added complication of the author writing in Word Perfect was that his file had to be imported into MSWord by Régis Normadeau, in the XYZ production department, before any copyediting took place. Although word processing has revolutionized both editing and writing, certain adjustments must be made if the author and editor, or for that matter, the editor and publisher, do not share the same technologies.

The paper copy of the *Condesa* manuscript (Draft 1), with Szanto’s corrections added to it, was returned to Rhonda in Nanaimo, providing a final text for proofreading purpose and a clear paper trail on the way to publication.

The author’s suggested changes included an emendation to the acknowledgments page, subtle changes in some phrasing, and an issue with the editorial spelling of “hellhole” and “workpants.” The author’s preference for “hell hole” was ruled out to maintain an agreed upon consistent Canadian spelling: “hellhole” and “hellfire” are spelled as one word in both the *Oxford Canadian* dictionary and the *ITP Nelson Canadian* dictionary. The author’s preference for either “work-pants” or “work pants” required a more diplomatic approach. Although “workpants” wasn’t spelled out in any dictionary, “workboot,” and “workshirt” was found in *ITP Nelson* and “workwear” spelled as one word was found in the *Oxford Canadian*, so the logical leap would be “workpants;” however, if Szanto preferred two words...? The decision was made to keep

“workpants” in place. In a 312-page novel, one might think this much attention given to two words might be excessive. However, this example of the editing process highlights the detail and negotiation involved in copyediting—an author has the right to challenge editorial choices, and an editor must be able to defend her decision. For the copyeditor, attention to details, the minutiae, is extremely important in achieving clarity and coherence, and ultimately to the production of a readable, marketable book.

In creating **The Conquests of Mexico** trilogy, an astute marketing decision was made to have a chapter from the next book in the trilogy included at the end of each novel. For example, a chapter from *The Condesa of M.* is included at the end of *Second Sight*. In close consultation with author, it was decided to place an introduction to *The Underside of Stones* at the end of *The Condesa of M.*, followed by the first story in the book. The editor and author agreed not to emphasize the “trilogy” concept on the book covers “in order not to discourage potential readers from buying the books individually. The idea was to lead them to want to read the next book in the trilogy once they came to the end of the current one” (notes of Rhonda Bailey). Including the first story from *The Underside of Stones* at the end of the trilogy in *The Condesa of M.* completes a circle, leading the reader to all three books. The published introduction, formatted as a title page, reads as follows:

The story of Jorge first coming to Micoácuaro is told in *The Underside of Stones*.

An excerpt from

THE UNDERSIDE OF STONES

by George Szanto.

Book one of
The Conquests of Mexico trilogy

THE EXPERT EYE: PROOFREADING**(November 4 to December 10, 2004)**

Proofreading is the comparison of two versions of the same document and involves the reading of the typesetter's final proof of the manuscript, as it would appear in print, against the final edited copy of the author's manuscript. A proofreader is required to compare the proof, or "live copy," to the final edited copy of the manuscript, or "dead copy," word for word and letter for letter. A close page-by-page scan of the typography—format, alignment, etc.—is also employed at this stage of the process. A proofreader must demonstrate his or her knowledge of standard proofreading marks, making two marks in pen for every correction: one in the text and a corresponding mark in the margin. In *Mark My Words*, Peggy Smith describes the need for a "telescopic eye" to proofread well (Smith, p. 17).

November 4— Proofreading by comparison, comparing the relevant parts of the marked copy (now dead) with the corrected copy (now live), constitutes an important aspect of quality control. After copyediting, the next step was to proofread the layout of *The Condesa of M.* (Draft 3) against the final edited manuscript (Draft 2). A copy of the Acrobat pdf layout of *The Condesa of M.* (live copy) was printed. The live copy was now on paper, and placed side by side with the dead copy to begin proofreading. The two versions were compared minutely.

A proofreader is expected to spot problems in language and thought, such as non-standard grammar. A familiarity with the style sheets for *The Condesa of M.* quickly led to the recognition of familiar spelling errors in the layout: "Tierra Caliente" once again appeared capitalized (Draft 3, pp. 68, 88). "Harpsichord" had replaced "pianola" (Draft 3,

p54), as Szanto had requested. However, on a second closer scrutiny, a comparison between the manuscript and layout revealed additional errors missed during copyediting. For example, “Tía Mercedes” (not on the style sheet) was both capitalized and spelled lower case. Some errors occur during typesetting; for example, the word “forearm” appeared spelled “fore-arm” (Draft 3, p. 59), an error possibly created in the typesetting of the manuscript, where a previous line break shifted, hyphenating the word. Also found was a sentence that made little sense, taking into consideration the author’s style: “She head, sighed—and listened” (Draft 3, p. 169). The Cormorant hardcover edition was checked and the same sentence was found (2001, p. 188). Although the sentence wasn’t a glaring error in language, it could confuse the reader. The author was consulted, and it now reads, “She turned her head...” (2005, p. 169).

A proofreader must also stay alert for problems in technical quality, such as misalignment, defective characters, wrong end-of-line division, or bad spacing. Word division occurs when a word must be divided at the end of a printed line. Also called “word breaks” or “line breaks,” the way the word is divided becomes especially important in proofreading. Not all syllable breaks are acceptable end-of-line breaks. Proofreaders require specialized knowledge to proofread well and need to be very familiar with the rules of language and editing to ensure conformity to a style. *The Chicago Manual of Style* is a great source of enlightenment.

December 9—The second proof of *The Condesa of M.* (Draft 4) was checked to ensure that no new problems had been introduced; for example, new bad breaks. A scan of the layout revealed an apparent and frequent fault in word spacing (more than one letter space between words) throughout, a distraction to the reader. Rhonda Bailey

advised that it might not be possible to fix the spacing because of the need to justify the lines and avoid bad breaks. In the end, the word spacing was corrected wherever possible.

The proof is the final result of a manuscript; in proof no changes should be made that can be avoided, so asking for additional changes to be made is risky: each change could affect the entire manuscript and require more time proofreading. The final copy of a book requires adherence to a production schedule, something both editor and typesetter are fully aware of; the cost in time making technical changes to a proof can escalate the cost of producing a book dramatically.

THE FINAL COPY

Being responsible for the transformation of manuscript to finished book is a huge undertaking carried out as a collaborative process between author, editor(s), proofreader, and the typesetter, whose technical expertise produces the final copy. On February 10, Rhonda Bailey sent an e-mail to announce the arrival of the new edition of *The Condesa of M.*, the last book and the final volume in the trilogy **The Conquests of Mexico**: “I just received my copies of the new edition today,” Rhonda wrote. “The books look beautiful.”

As discussed earlier in this report, the design of a book is developed as an integral part of the editorial style and marketing concept. A book cover often leads an entire marketing campaign, and needs to grab the attention of the reader. In designing the 2005 edition of *The Condesa of M.*, a decision agreed to by both the editor and author was made to use the same cover image that appeared on the Cormorant Books hardcover edition (2001). The image, a painting by Salvador Dali, “Equestrian Fantasy: Lady Dunn” (1954), is strikingly beautiful and mysterious—much like the eighteenth-century

heroine of *The Condesa of M.* (see Appendix B). The XYZ Publishing cover of *The Condesa of M.* is distinguished from the 2001 hardcover edition by a subtle orange band across the cover that houses the title, a design decision carried out by Zirval Design (Montreal) on the cover of all three books in the trilogy. Visually, each book of the trilogy is unique in that the chosen cover art best describes the individual novel, yet there is an atmosphere of mystery evoked on all three covers. In keeping with the new trade paperback format adopted for all three books, the cover of *The Condesa of M.* was produced with French flaps that included an introduction to the novel, an author photograph and biography, and a promotional introduction to **The Conquests of Mexico** trilogy. **The Conquests of Mexico** was now complete, prepared for its official introduction to the Canadian book world.

PART III: MARKETING AND PROMOTION

Marketing and promotion of **The Conquests of Mexico** began well before the first book of the trilogy, *The Underside of Stones*, was released by XYZ Publishing as a new format reprint in September 2004, along with the first edition of *Second Sight*. As this project report points out, a marketing plan was a consideration at the beginning of the acquisition phase of all three titles, and through the editing process of the entire trilogy.

The editorial duties associated with *The Condesa of M.* and the marketing plans for the complete trilogy, beginning with the first two books, were undertaken at the same time. Both a regional and a national marketing campaign were initiated, and it was necessary to organize the details involved and implement a promotional plan. A follow

up on plans for the author's fall book tour to promote *The Underside of Stones* and *Second Sight* in western Canada, Toronto, and Montreal was also required. At the same time, promotional plans for the publication of *The Condesa of M.* (released in February 2005) were also underway. An advance marketing and promotion plan for **The Conquests of Mexico** trilogy was introduced: Canadian literary festivals were contacted in early January 2005 to "pitch" Szanto as a presenter and to introduce the trilogy to festival coordinators. All three books were available in both French and English at the time of the festivals in the fall of 2005.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

A marketing plan requires promotional materials and access to the resources available in promoting a book. Promotional materials are often included in a publisher's "marketing kit" supplied to sales representatives, and may include author photos, a press release, both a short description and a synopsis of the book, a colour copy of the cover, excerpts from reviews, an author bio, a current copy of the publisher's catalogue, a list of marketing tips, and an overview of the promotion plans. Resources available in promoting a book include paid advertising, publicity (such as reviews), funding sources, contacts for possible reading venues, bookstores and booksellers, book fairs, literary award submissions, promotional opportunities such as BC Books For Everybody (BFE), and of course the author—an invaluable resource in promoting their own work.

The promotional materials and resources are key elements in marketing. As "tools of the trade," their application is paramount in launching a successful marketing

campaign. For example, the importance of writing an exemplary press release cannot be underestimated.

The Press Release

In a press release, all the elements in a marketing kit are compiled into one page—author bio, possibly a photo, the book’s cover, a descriptive synopsis, publishing information, excerpts from reviews, and distribution and contact information. As a one-page pitch, a press release must spark interest within the first tag line and give complete information in the body of the text on the author, the publisher, and the book being promoted. A descriptive synopsis of the book must engage the reader’s interest and promptly answer the question: What’s the story about? A press release is the first introduction to a new book to media, and is accompanied by an Advance Reading Copy of the book (ARC), often sent before publication in the form of advance bound galley of the book. ARCs of *Second Sight* were sent in advance of publication. A successful press release can lead to well-placed book reviews, interviews in both print and on radio or TV, feature articles, and invitations to reading events, which in turn provides free advertising, or publicity, directed to the book-buying public.

On August 31, a final copy of press material (press release and author information) was sent out with the review copies of *The Underside of Stones* and *Second Sight* to major newspapers and review journals nationwide, such as *Quill & Quire* and *Books in Canada*. The two books were being mailed out together, and although a press release for *The Underside of Stones* was being tucked inside that book, the focus was on the new novel *Second Sight* (See Appendix A). The digital files of the final press release (and other promotional material, including a pdf of the XYZ Publishing fall 2004

catalogue) was printed out or e-mailed for setting up the author's regional tour and future event proposals and promotions.

A misleading fact easily gets repeated in various promotional documents, creating unnecessary confusion at the marketing level. An erroneous statement from the press release that described *Second Sight* as “the final volume in [his] **The Conquests of Mexico** trilogy” proved to be a contentious issue in organizing a fall reading event. An attempt was made to send corrections out, but obviously some were missed. Interestingly, there was also some issue taken by the host of the reading event with the first two paragraphs of the XYZ press release that describe the political dangers in publishing *Second Sight* as not being factual. The press release was written by a publicist at Susan Meisner Publicity based on material originally written by George Szanto and provided by his agent. A fall review of *Second Sight* in *The Vancouver Sun* describes the political climate of Mexico at the time of Szanto's writing of the novel (See Appendix C). It is in the tumultuous years after the PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party) came to power in 1988 that Szanto set his novel *Second Sight*. In his review, Bill King describes the aftermath of the “stolen” presidential election: “In the years that followed, hundreds of pro-democracy activists who refused to accept the results were murdered or ‘disappeared’ by state security forces” (*Vancouver Sun*, D20).

A successful press release helps generate publicity, or free advertising, and goes a long way towards obtaining national coverage of a book. Favourable reviews of *Second Sight* were published in both national and regional newspapers and magazines (*Vancouver Sun*, *Quill & Quire*, *Montréal Review of Books*, *The Globe & Mail*, *BC*

Bookworld) and these reviews were then available to be included in promoting future author readings and events.

The press release for each book in **The Conquests of Mexico** trilogy tied the three books together as a trilogy; however, emphasis was also placed on each book being promoted as an individual narrative that stands alone. Although *The Condesa of M.* would be marketed along with *Second Sight* and *The Underside of Stones* as a trilogy set in Mexico, by not exclusively promoting the novels as a trilogy in the press release and on the book covers, or, for that matter, in paid advertising, readers would not be discouraged from reading each book as an individual novel.

The Contact List

The contact list is a crucial piece of information as it relates to media contacts, festival directors, bookstore venues and invitation lists for events. When promotion plans began for George Szanto's fall book tour, extensive research of possible venues and media contacts was conducted, in addition to a follow up of the contact list of established venues, such as Vancouver's WOTS. There are excellent resources that list current venues and contact information, such as the Canada Council list of literary readings on the CC web site, the Association of Canadian Publishers Digital Media List on the ACP web site, and the Literary Press Group events listings. However, contact information can quickly go out of date. This often results in either no reply to event and media proposals, or being directed to another contact person. On two occasions, it was sadly discovered that the contact person, one the owner of a bookstore and the other a popular radio host, had recently died, which gave the process an additional immediacy and reinforced the

sense of working with an interconnected community involved in promoting and sustaining literature and the arts in Canada.

Maintaining a current and viable contact list is time-consuming, requires good research skills, and can yield access to new information and new opportunities. For example, a contact list supplied by the author for a tour of the Atlantic Provinces led through various channels to an invitation to host a workshop in Halifax for the Writers' Federation of Nova Scotia during the weekend of the Halifax WOTS book festival in September of 2005. Through the same channels, it was discovered that the travel time and expense of a book tour in Newfoundland was prohibitive. In another example, a contact made with a publisher in Manitoba also looking for events for authors on the east coast, led to an interesting exchange of co-operative marketing ideas.

In implementing a promotional strategy for **The Conquests of Mexico**, it became necessary to build and follow contact lists of possible venues in bookstores, universities, libraries, festivals, reading series, and media contacts across Canada. Although success in booking events was less than expected, in most part due to conflicts in schedule between the author and host venues, keeping in touch through a viable contact list provided much needed information in organizing a promotional plan.

MEDIA WITH A MANDATE ON CANADIAN LITERATURE

Celebrating Canada is a familiar promotion to Canadians. Celebrating the Canadian author has been a national pastime since the 1960s when canonical writers, such as Margaret Laurence and Robertson Davies, described in their fiction what it was like to live in Canada and be a Canadian. Academics, critics, publishers, and granting bodies

put their collective efforts into supporting those writers who were linked in very important ways to questions of national identity and citizenship. The end aim, as critic John Metcalf describes it, “was not to expand the understanding of literature but to foster the politics of nationalism” (“False Idols,” p. 13). However, as MacSkimming points out, it was also a time when “Canadians finally knew the pleasures of books in which their lives and localities became literature” (p.199). Promoting Canadians was an important agenda but literature was certainly discussed for its own sake. *Read Canadian*, a guide to “the unknown galaxy of Canadian books,” was released in 1972 and sold 10,000 copies in its first ten months. Clearly, Canadians were engaged with a literature of their own. To sustain that literature, the politics of nationalism, which arose largely from the effort of publishers, was hugely influential in lobbying for and obtaining important structural measures that would influence government policy to support and protect Canadian-owned publishing; for example, Marcel Masse’s Baie-Comeau Agreement was drafted to protect Canadian publisher’s majority control from foreign investors. In 2004, promoting **The Conquests of Mexico** led to an encounter with the media and a 1960s agenda that should perhaps be re-evaluated in relation to what defines Canadian literature as it affects publishing in Canada today.

The notion of a Canadian literature can be traced to the influence of early Canadian publishing figures like Lorne Pierce, who became editor-in-chief at Ryerson Press in 1920. As MacSkimming describes it, “Convinced that the nation had come of age in the war and was ready to express a new spiritual identity through literature, Pierce ransacked the country for writers on his cross-country tours” (p. 29). In the 1950s and beyond, publishers such as McClelland & Stewart, who promoted themselves as “The

Canadian Publisher,” invigorated the notion of a Canadian literature by actively seeking out and publishing Canadian authors. In 1958, under the guidance of University of Toronto professor Malcolm Ross, M&S launched the New Canadian Library, the core of the Canlit courses that flourished in the decades to come.

Since the 1950s, CBC Radio has played a significant role in creating an audience for Canadian authors and helped build readership and prestige for many of the Canadian writers considered important today, a role that helped shape Canada’s literary evolution. As an early innovator, CBC producer Robert Weaver was highly influential in using the CBC as a vehicle for promoting Canadian short fiction, poetry, drama, and criticism to a national audience. Programs such as *Canadian Stories*, *CBC Wednesday Night*, *Critically Speaking*, and later *Anthology* acquainted listeners with the work of Morley Callaghan, Mordecai Richler, Sinclair Ross, Hugh Garner, Mavis Gallant, Alice Munro, and others who became national literary figures. As MacSkimming points out, “Weaver was highly cognizant of how electronic media were shaping mass audiences, homogenizing taste and experience regardless of national borders” (p. 39). At the 1955 Kingston Canadian Writer’s Conference, Weaver identified a trend in public reception to Canadian authors: “Canadians were in fact suspicious of writers who had been successful internationally. Books by Ethel Wilson, Mordecai Richler, and Ernest Buckler had been recognized abroad but slighted by Canadian reviewers. Other writers, whose talents Weaver considered inferior, had fared better with domestic critics and the public, in part because *‘their books are so obviously Canadian’* [italics mine]” (MacSkimming, pp. 38-39). In the late 1950s and into the 1960s, a shortage of both publishers and booksellers enabled

CBC Radio to enact an early form of audio publishing on a national level whose influence remains to this day.

Early in the fall 2004 tour to promote *The Underside of Stones* and *Second Sight*, a determined effort was made to have George Szanto booked on the CBC morning radio show “Sounds Like Canada,” in Vancouver, to coincide with his reading at Vancouver’s WOTS. Szanto had previously worked with the popular show’s even more popular host, Shelagh Rogers, on a three-part series about Mexico in the mid-1990s. The series, which included interviews with several Mexican writers, later became the subject of Szanto’s book *Inside the Statues of Saints: Mexican Writers on Culture and Corruption, Politics and Daily Life* (1996, Véhicule Press, Montréal). In 2005, however, the traditionally book-friendly CBC rejected the request for an interview to promote two new Canadian publications and George Szanto’s upcoming appearance at Vancouver WOTS. CBC’s “Sounds Like Canada,” as their title suggests, is predominantly interested in Canadian writers’ writing about “the complexity” of Canada, an interest verified by a producer of the show in a recent e-mail (June 1). As a Canadian author writing about Mexico, George Szanto didn’t easily fit the criteria for guests on influential radio shows such as CBC’s “Sounds Like Canada,” whose mandate didn’t fit the trilogy. Robert Weaver’s 1955 observation of the trend in public reception to the “obviously Canadian” book seems prescient today.

In Robert Wright’s book (2001) *Hip and Trivial: Youth Culture, Book Publishing, and the Greying of Canadian Nationalism*, he asks the fundamental question: “What [is] the relationship between Canadian literature and citizenship?” (p. 21). The book was commissioned as a study for Book Publishing Industry Development Program (BPIDP)

of the federal Department of Canadian Heritage. The mandate was to study the relationship between Canadian youth and Canadian literature, and asks whether there was a retreat from reading Canadian literature among young Canadians. Wright concludes that the “baby boom cohort” is responsible for perpetuating a canonized body of Canadian literature, whereas young Canadians demonstrated a “globalized literary sensibility” (p. 150). Wright is quick to point out that Canadian youth have not rejected Canadian literature, but instead have redefined it to include a diverse list of new and emerging Canadian authors, regardless of a book’s Canadian content. According to Wright, the Canadian youth culture is responding to technological change, post-NAFTA alliances, and globalization. Their aim is more literary and technical, not political (p. 151). Young Canadians, Wright concludes, identify themselves strongly as Canadians, but without “ideological obligation” (p. 205).

Publishers need to be aware of the future in Canadian publishing and have available to them studies such as Wright’s to help identify the trends that may affect their own publishing program. From a marketing standpoint, publishers’ traditional marketing efforts need to meet the new consumer realities evidenced by Wright’s study, such as online publishing and buying. Perhaps more importantly, Canadian publishers, and supporting Canadian media, should not ignore what Wright describes in his study as a trend toward a “globalized literary sensibility” (p. 150). Identifying Canadian literature and promoting its reception is an ongoing task for the publisher; the book industry as a whole must adapt to its evolving nature. As previously stated, convincing the Canadian media, booksellers, and, ultimately, Canadian readers that Timothy Findley may be right

in his comment, “Szanto’s time has surely come,” became part of the task in promoting **The Conquests of Mexico** trilogy.

Another aspect of Wright’s study, and one that has a direct impact on the promotion of George Szanto’s trilogy, addresses the publisher’s need to label a book in a certain way so that booksellers know where to put it on a shelf. For instance, Canadian authors are often easy to place as “regional,” an easily recognizable category to booksellers and readers alike. Which books get attention? In promoting **The Conquests of Mexico** trilogy it was found that time and again there was a perceived lack of marketability of the trilogy by bookstore owners, event organizers, media and others. George Szanto is not a high profile author whose name garners media attention like Michael Ondaatje, for example, and is relatively unknown: therefore more focus is placed on the author’s subject matter. Promoting Canadian authors writing about Canada was familiar to potential venue hosts; a book about a Canadian in Mexico was not. Although critical response to the novels in **The Conquests of Mexico** was highly favourable in both regional and national magazines and newspapers, a significant measure of the response received in promoting the books directly to booksellers and to event coordinators echoed the sentiment that “Canadian readers would not be interested in a book about Mexico.”

Labeling an author or a book imposes suppositions of an author’s intentions. In describing the writing of **The Conquests of Mexico**, Szanto explains that “there is memory in home, and writing about a place where I’m not is familiar terrain for me as a writer” (interview, Nanaimo, February 3). Szanto’s comment reveals the creative and critical distance the author experiences in writing from Mexico that serves to bring him

closer to home. A Canadian sensibility is infused throughout all three books in the trilogy in the psyche of the central character, Jorge, a thinly disguised George Szanto. The *Canadian Oxford* dictionary describes sensibility as “a person’s moral, emotional, or aesthetic ideas or standards.” In writing **The Conquests of Mexico**, Szanto engages all three to reflect the central values of Canadian culture we all recognize; for example, Jorge is horrified by the brutality inflicted on wives and dogs in equal measure as the status quo in some Mexican homes, a domestic microcosm of the political brutality that gripped the country in the 1980s. The geographical and chronological aspects of **The Conquests of Mexico** seem to be arbitrary to the author in his engagement with literature—as is the label “international” author. Canadian authors favoured by media such as CBC Radio “Sounds Like Canada,” describe what it is like to live in Canada’s landscape and be a Canadian, an adherence to the 1960s rallying cry for Canadian literature, whereas the novels in George Szanto’s trilogy **The Conquests of Mexico** map the Canadian imagination in an unfamiliar terrain.

In promoting **The Conquests of Mexico**, particularly to Canadian media, two important points emerged. One is that celebrating Canada will always be a familiar promotion. The other is that the task of the publisher is to expand the understanding of Canadian literature, supported by government-funded studies such as Robert Wright’s.

DOLLARS THAT MAKE SENSE: FUNDING PROMOTION

Canadian government funding of the arts was initiated in 1957 when the Canada Council for the Arts was created to “foster and promote the study and enjoyment of, and the production of works in, the arts” (www.canadacouncil.ca), putting an emphasis on

cultural output. In the 1960s, emerging publishers were heavily supported by the Canada Council to encourage a national publishing program. Today, Canada Council funding still plays an integral part in publishing in Canada.

In developing and implementing a promotion plan for George Szanto's novels in **The Conquests of Mexico** trilogy, the guidelines involved in making a grant application for author promotion tours played a significant role. Canada Council funding supports the publisher and writer in the cost of a book tour, and also supports hosting venues, such as universities, festival events, and libraries. One of the most important considerations of the granting process is the deadline imposed for submission of an application for funding. A publisher, as well as hosting venues, must submit a form with a full description of the promotional plan well in advance of the book tour or planned events. The implication for marketing and sales is the need to be aware of the timelines involved in planning and funding a promotion tour.

In planning a tour or any events for George Szanto's novels in **The Conquests of Mexico** trilogy, it was imperative to contact bookstores and venues as early as possible. Planning a fall tour was a challenge in terms of late scheduling, with the added challenge of many contacts away on holiday during the summer months. Prominent bookstore venues, such as Greenwood's Bookshoppe in Edmonton, had already booked their reading events for the fall season. The most competitive venues, such as university reading series and festivals, often book authors a year in advance when applying for Canada Council funding.

The specifics of Canada Council funding for literary readings and festivals are also significant when planning a promotion tour (full details can be found on the Canada

Council web site). Canadian organizations such as universities, public libraries, writers' associations, museums, art galleries, and community centres that intend to host four or more full readings can apply for funding (a maximum of twelve). Joint readings are also a consideration, as are co-op events that involve local and/or regional organizations. The guidelines for literary festivals ensure a committed and successful venue is being supported: hosts of literary festivals must have hosted a minimum of 20 paid writers for at least two consecutive years to apply for funding. Knowing application deadlines and the host organizations that are supported by Canada Council funding were invaluable in planning a promotion tour for 2005. An understanding of the funding requirements for Canada Council grants not only provides the details necessary to successfully plan a book tour, but also provides information that contributes to the understanding of the role of the publisher in promoting authors and their books.

The Book Publishing Support program provides support to book publishers for a portion of the costs of promotion tours that “give greater public and media exposure to their current publication programs.” Support is available for Canadian authors, illustrators, and translators of titles eligible for Canada Council funding (note the importance of all three books in the trilogy to be eligible titles, as discussed earlier in this report). Eligible promotional activities include book launches, book signings, interviews with the media and public readings that do not receive support funded through the Literary Readings and Festival program, or a national association receiving Council public readings support—in other words, no “double dipping.” An author promotion tour grant can only be used to pay either travel (maximum \$1500) or accommodation and meals to a maximum of \$125 per day for 12 days. The publisher must come up with a

significant amount of the costs of a tour. In planning the promotion of George Szanto's novels in **The Conquests of Mexico** trilogy, it was imperative to be fully aware of funding information for various venues to assess the viability of a particular event, and to avoid double dipping.

A standard expectation between the publisher and the author, an expectation included as a clause in XYZ's contract, is that the author agrees to promote the book. George Szanto feels strongly that writers should be paid—an expectation strongly supported by the Writers' Union of Canada. Finding venues with available Canada Council funding is sometimes awkward. Potential hosts seem to guard their funding information, which results in making less than fully informed decisions. In general, the ambitions for promoting **The Conquests of Mexico** trilogy extended beyond those costs covered by Council funding, and both the author and publisher made a financial investment in its success.

THE BOOK TOUR

The book tour requires an integrated promotion plan. Canada Council guidelines for promotional funding stipulate that there must be at least two events in each location of a book tour. The aim of an integrated plan is to promote reading events and book signings by proposing interviews with the author in print and on radio and TV, reviews of the book being promoted, and feature articles in local newspaper and magazines. A successful integrated plan is a matter of perfect timing: the author, the host venue, and local media must be scheduled according to their willingness and availability at the time of the event. In addition to funding availability, scheduling plays a significant role in the

success of a book tour. For example, scheduling a regional book tour for BC and Alberta into a relatively small time frame (two weeks) posed a significant challenge. Because George Szanto was travelling by car through two provinces, travel time became a very important consideration and both the author and a map would need to be consulted.

A plan for **The Conquests of Mexico** trilogy was developed in two phases: a fall promotion plan for the first two novels of the trilogy, *The Underside of Stones* and *Second Sight*, released in September 2004; and a 2005 promotion plan for the spring release of the third novel to complete the trilogy, *The Condesa of M.* For the 2005 promotion plan, a national campaign to promote **The Conquests of Mexico** trilogy in literary festivals across Canada was initiated. Booking an author with a festival meant that the author would be paid and expenses would be shared between the festival organizers and the publisher, a very cost effective way to promote an author, with the added significant benefit of the festival's own advertising and promotion for their event. All three books were available in both French and English at the time of the fall festivals, including Vancouver's Writers' Festival, Sechelt Festival of the Written Arts, Toronto International Festival of the Arts, Calgary Wordfest, and Word On The Street in Halifax.

For the fall 2004 promotion of the first two novels of the trilogy, *The Underside of Stones* and *Second Sight*, several events were confirmed in advance. George Szanto was to read at Vancouver WOTS in the "VanCity Voices" multicultural tent on September 26, and was scheduled for a three-hour session at York University in Toronto in November. He was also scheduled to appear at the XYZ Publishing booth for a signing of his French and English books at Le Salon du livre in Montréal. Publicity (newspaper and radio interviews) for these events was set up in co-operation with

publicists in Montréal and Toronto, and a second event at the time of Le Salon du livre was booked at the Double Hook Book Shop. A promotion tour of the BC Interior and Alberta to take place right after Vancouver WOTS was arranged which included Victoria if feasible. The author was invited to read in Kamloops at University-College of the Cariboo and at Pages Bookstore in Calgary. Contingent arrangements were made to book readings in Kelowna, Penticton, and Vernon.

Prior to the tour, a launch was held September 19 at The Sandstone Studio at Pages Marina on Gabriola Island, home of the author, to celebrate the new novel *Second Sight*, and the release of the new edition of *The Underside of Stones*. The event was later described in a feature article by Katherine Gordon in *Boulevard*, Victoria's "urban living" magazine, in January 2005:

It's a warm and sunny afternoon on Gabriola Island and local bookstore owner Phyllis Reeve is introducing author George Szanto to read from his newly released novel *Second Sight*.... "If I have it correctly," she says slyly, staring with mock concentration at the book's elegant blue cover, "while this is the last book released in George Szanto's trilogy of stories about Mexico, it's actually the second in the series. Now, *The Underside of Stones* is the first of the three novels"—here she pauses for comic effect—"and it actually did come out first. But *The Condesa of M.* is the last book in the trilogy, even though it came out second. Now, have I got that right, George?" She knows she has; the author is laughing in surrender.

(Gordon, "A Different View," p.33)

The above excerpt acknowledges the possible impact of the publishing history of the trilogy on an audience, and also demonstrates an important affection for the author and familiarity with his work. This same affection and familiarity was shared by the first contact for the promotion tour, Maxine Ruvinsky, a journalism professor at University-College of the Cariboo (UCC) in Kamloops. The author, George Szanto, had been a guest speaker at UCC in 2001 where he presented his essay “Truth and Storytelling.” Szanto had evidently made a wonderful impression that helped pave the way for a successful reading event in 2004.

A challenge that became apparent in planning the fall book tour was the reluctance of bookstores to book a reading or book signing if a local university is hosting an event, and vice versa. This particular truism was born out as ongoing efforts were made to plan a book tour. A 2005 spring event at the University of Alberta in Edmonton was cited as a reason for promised bookstore venues not hosting events in Edmonton. Conversely, the author’s reading at Pages Bookstore in Calgary precluded him from an event at the University of Calgary, where the university’s “readings person” explained that the university and Pages Bookstore attracted the same audience. Another possible explanation was made evident during the planning of events for UCC. Merlin Books in Kamloops was contacted to see if it would be interested in selling books at the event, once a common practice for independent bookstores to participate in university events. Now, however, UCC bookstore had taken over that responsibility, a move that could be perceived as a threat to the bookstore’s customer base.

For the publisher, the benefits of different venues must be taken into consideration. To schedule an author such as George Szanto with a university is relatively

easy to accomplish, as his background in academia is welcomed as a benefit to the host institution; however, while a university reading helps publicize an author, promoting an event in a bookstore would most likely generate greater book sales.

At the same time as the fall 2004 book tour was being arranged, research began on literary festivals across Canada in preparation for the 2005 promotion plan. With funding availability and the author's proposed schedule to consider, a contact list was developed. One of the requests from the author was a book tour in the Atlantic Provinces in the fall of 2005 to coincide with the Halifax WOTS and possible university venues. A capacious e-mail arrived from George Szanto containing the e-mail forwarded from various friends on the east coast, whose affection and support for the author was apparent. From that e-mail, a far-reaching contact list was compiled for possible venues in the Atlantic Provinces. Although all the details involved in following up with the east coast contacts would be too exhaustive for this report, in planning a 2005 fall book tour of the Atlantic Provinces, an aspect of Canadian publishing became apparent: a coast-to-coast promotion plan does not seem viable for a small publisher. Not only is travel time and expense prohibitive, many venues in the Atlantic Provinces express a priority to support local writers with the funding available to them in the form of federal and provincial grants. The publisher, along with the author, is forced to make risk-taking financial decisions in order to participate in events.

Of the thirteen literary festivals across Canada that received proposals for a 2005 promotion of **The Conquests of Mexico** trilogy, four replied and requested the three books as well as further promotional material for consideration by their committees—Toronto International Writers' Festival, Sechelt Writers' Festival, the Victoria Literary

Arts Festival, and the JCCGV Writers' Festival (Jewish Community Centre of Greater Vancouver). The author was already booked to appear at the Blue Metropolis literary festival in Montréal in April 2005.

A BREAKTHROUGH: THE JOY READ PROJECT

The Joy Read project is an initiative by the Literary Press Group (LPG) to promote Canadian authors and publishers through a national marketing campaign to facilitate the national distribution and marketing of Canadian books. The LPG is a non-profit association of Canadian-owned and -operated book publishers and is involved in many aspects of the Canadian publishing industry. The LPG emerged in 1975 from a growing membership in the ACP that began to distinguish the needs of the small literary presses as different from those of large trade or scholarly publishers. The LPG launched a series of joint marketing ventures and created the LPG's sales consortium, a network of part-time commissioned reps based in all regions. Then as now, the LPG reps worked particularly well with independent bookstores committed to carrying small-press titles. In 1987, the LPG collectively contracted with the University of Toronto Press Distribution for order fulfillment and customer accounting. The Distribution Project, as it was called, was the most successful project at the time, as the UTP arrangement resulted in substantial increases in sales for participating publishers. In 1992, the LPG's joint distribution project moved to General Distribution Services (GDS). When GDS collapsed in 2002, the LPG and ACP boards were instrumental in negotiating remedies with officials at Canadian Heritage, the Canada Council, and the Ontario government. The organization has continued to grow through imaginative promotion and supporting

grants to increase membership (there are currently forty-eight members) and build political clout. An autonomous LPG now lobbies for its members outside the confines of the ACP, making an important commitment to the survival of the small literary press in Canada.

In 2004, the LPG initiated the project *Take a Joy Read, Canada!* to take place between January and December 2005. Funded by the Department of Canadian Heritage, the project's aim is to reach new readers by offering a greater selection of titles in the marketplace, and to increase the readers' awareness of diverse and original Canadian books. The benefit to publishers is increased sales, getting the books into stores across Canada, and both national and local promotion of events in an integrated marketing campaign. In November 2004, XYZ Publishing signed up *Second Sight* as a January/February feature title and *The Condesa of M.* as a feature title for March/April, at a cost per participating title of \$400 and \$900 respectively. The LPG promotion initially included forty-five independent bookstores across Canada, Amazon.ca, and the media. In December 2004, Chapters/Indigo came on board for *Take a Joy Read, Canada!*

XYZ Publishing's decision to take part in the project provided the breakthrough needed to promote the trilogy as a national campaign with the support of independent retailers across Canada, on-line advertising and sales promotion, print advertising and publicity, and the clout of Chapters/Indigo market power. As book-purchasing surveys show, the retail environment is important. *Take a Joy Read* marketing materials were designed and printed for independent bookstores and Indigo to display titles in participating stores nationwide, in addition to promotional materials provided by participating publishers (reading copies, postcards, bookmarks, press releases etc.),

traditional tools to stimulate interest, or purchase by final customers. A reality of sales promotion today also involves the Internet and other electronic media. Participation in the Joy Read project guarantees that titles will be featured on the Joy Read branded booklist on Amazon.ca; featured titles are highlighted in rotation on the Amazon.ca home page, the Books home page, and relevant categories. LPG publicity of the entire project, which includes a substantial website presence, connects titles to a massive national marketing campaign.

Publishers traditionally use print advertising and publicity as the preferred medium in reaching their target customer. Print advertising supports mass selling: that is, communicating with large numbers of customers at the same time. Print advertising is expensive for the small publisher; for example, a full-page ad in *The Globe & Mail* isn't remotely possible for the small publisher as it is for the larger publishers, such as M&S. A key LPG service developed in the 1990s was assisting publishers with advertising. The LPG collective received better rates from media venues than were offered to individual publishers. Combined with assistance from the funding bodies, the LPG could offer substantial savings on advertising. Through the LPG advertising project, XYZ purchased ads for *Second Sight* and *The Underside of Stones* in *Quill & Quire*, *BC Bookworld*, *the Globe and Mail*, and *The Montreal Review of Books* in fall 2004. By participating in Joy Read, advertising is provided at a much lower cost in reaching a target customer through mass selling. Well-designed ads featuring company events and news are placed weekly in major national print media, such as the influential Saturday Books section of *The Globe and Mail*, and in regional print media to promote local events, such as the *Georgia Straight* in Vancouver (See Appendix D for ad samples from *The Globe and Mail*).

Department of Heritage funding of the project is based on the understanding that Joy Read ads also feature listings of literary activities across the country in any given week, meaning that ad event listings are not limited to Joy Read titles/authors, but ad listings are open to all events, awards, and media that a publisher's author is involved in as long as the publisher has signed up for the Joy Read campaign.

The LPG ads, along with displays, showed early success in generating awareness of Joy Read titles. In a February 2005 Joy Read Update, it was noted that many non-LPG publishers had contacted the project coordinator about the ads, asking how they can get their events and titles featured in them. More importantly, statistics showed people were buying more LPG and independent Canadian titles—both booksellers and book buyers. The marketing structure of the promotion targets 80% of the titles, defined as thirty of the forty titles in each cycle, at 45% discount, ordered by all participating independent bookstores (up to forty-five stores). In the February 2005 Update, the participating bookstores reported they were selling more LPG titles than before. This can be tied to both the displays and ads, and also to the fact that some of these stores may not have carried these titles before. However, orders are not guaranteed, and publishers gamble, even though they have paid their title fee to participate. As of February 2005, the average quantity sold to independents per title was 126. Average quantity sold to Indigo per title was 311. In total, the book orders for the Jan/Feb cycle numbered 10,691 (Joy Read Update 11, Volume 1, Jan/Feb early review). In January 2005, the number of books shipped to stores exceeded all of 2004's book orders for *Second Sight*, demonstrating a significant and accelerated increase in sales for XYZ Publishing. The Joy Read campaign and its built-in publicity also provided much needed support for the 2005 promotion tour.

PART IV: CONCLUSION

With the release of *The Condesa of M.* in February, **The Conquests of Mexico** trilogy was complete, and a reading event to introduce the trilogy at Bolen Books in Victoria was scheduled for February 19, 2005. A poster of the event created by Zirval Design for XYZ, displays all three vibrant book covers and announces the debut of **The Conquests of Mexico** trilogy in an invitation to a “special evening” (see Appendix E). The event was publicized in a feature article in Victoria’s *Monday Magazine* that profiled three authors participating in “a literary evening with a very strong sense of cultural interplay” (Gignac, “Triple Play,” p.16). Pauline Holdstock and Rattawut Lapcharoensap joined George Szanto to offer their perspectives from their respective novels set in Renaissance Italy and Thailand. In a quote from *Monday Magazine*, Sarah Gignac describes the three authors and the impact of their work on the Canadian reader: “From their global perspectives, Szanto, Holdstock and Lacharoensap guide us through new worlds and show them to us with fresh eyes” (16). In **The Conquests of Mexico**, George Szanto guides us through Mexico with open eyes, on the edge of things, and in awe of what he finds to tell us back home.

Bolen Books’ decision to promote **The Conquests of Mexico** as part of a multicultural literary event is indicative of the trilogy’s need for a specialized approach in marketing the books to a Canadian audience. In a 1998 report on the editing process, Rhonda Bailey initiates a discussion of the “social contract” in publishing, whereby the editing and marketing of a book involves a set of activities and a social process (Bailey, p. 56). “A socialized text,” quotes Bailey, “is a text that came into being through

collaborative social effort, which has socialized the common readers of the text” (Cohen [Ed], 1991, p. 25, cited in Bailey, p.57). The “global perspective” described in the promotion of the Bolen Books’ literary event exemplifies a collaborative effort between the publisher and the bookseller whose common marketing goals helped to initiate a creative marketing approach to “socialize” the potential readers of the trilogy. Bolen Books’ marketing strategy of a multicultural event was designed to appeal to the globalized literary sensibility of a potential audience. As previously mentioned, identifying Canadian literature and promoting its reception is an ongoing enterprise for the publisher; the bookseller, as demonstrated by the Bolen Books event, must also adapt to its evolving nature. The end result is a greater audience engagement with the potential of Canadian-authored books, such as George Szanto’s trilogy **The Conquests of Mexico**.

It is my hope that this project report not only demonstrates current industry practices in publishing that include the practical issues worked on during the manuscript preparation and promotion of **The Conquests of Mexico** trilogy by George Szanto, but also reveals some of the issues that affect Canadian publishing and opens them to question. I have also attempted to make clear throughout the important role of the author in contributing expertise, energy and professionalism to a publishing project. George Szanto proved to be exceptional in this regard. XYZ’s uniqueness as a bilingual publisher and the company’s willingness to take on a new direction in Canadian publishing not only provided the opportunity to publish **The Conquests of Mexico**, but also demonstrated XYZ Publishing’s entrepreneurial and literary vision in setting a precedent for cultural cooperation.

REFERENCES

- Bailey, Rhonda. (1998). *The editor as Merlin: A case study of the editing process for "Zigzag: A life on the move" by James Huston*. Project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Publishing in the Master of Publishing program. Simon Fraser University.
- Barber, Katherine. (1998). *The Canadian Oxford dictionary*. Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press Canada.
- CP Caps and spelling* (15th edition). (2000). Toronto: Canadian Press.
- Cohen, Philip. (Ed). (1991). *Devils and angels: Textual editing and literary theory*. Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia.
- Cragg, Catherine, et al. (2nd edition). (2000). *Editing Canadian English*. Toronto: Editor's Association of Canada/Association canadienne des rédacteurs-réviseurs.
- The Chicago manual of style*. (14th edition). (1993). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Gignac, Sarah. (2005). Triple play: Around the world in three authors. *Monday Magazine*, Victoria, 31(7), p. 16.
- Goodrich, Chris. (1990, July 29). Book review of *The Underside of Stones* by George Szanto, *New York Times*, pp. BR 20-21.
- Gordon, Katherine. (2005, January/February). A different view. *Boulevard magazine*, Victoria, p.33.
- Henighan, Stephen. (2002). *When words deny the world: The reshaping of Canadian writing*. Erin, Ontario: Porcupine Quill.
- ITP Nelson Canadian dictionary of the English language*. (1997). Scarborough, Ontario: International Thompson Publishing.
- King, Bill. (2004, October 23). Fear and loathing down Mexico way. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. D 20.
- Lea, Christine. (Ed). (1993). *The Oxford paperback Spanish dictionary*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Lorimer, Rowland. (1997). *Vibrant but threatened: Book publishing in Canada*. Vancouver, BC: Canadian Centre for Studies in Publishing, Simon Fraser University.
- MacSkimming, Roy. (2003). *The perilous trade: Publishing Canada's writers*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart.
- Manguel, Alberto. (1990, April 21). Book review of *The Underside of Stones* by George Szanto. *The Globe & Mail*. p. D 1.

- Metcalf, John. (2000, July). False idols: When it comes to recognizing great literature, Canadian readers get it mostly wrong. *Quill & Quire*, 66 (7), 13, 45.
- Professional editorial standards*. (revised edition). (2000). Toronto: Editor's Association of Canada/Association canadienne des rédacteurs-réviseurs.
- Shapiro, Stanley J., et al. (10th Canadian edition). (2003). *Basic marketing: A global managerial approach*. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson.
- Smith, Peggy. (1993). *Mark my words: Instruction and practice in proofreading*. Alexandria, VA: EEI Press.
- Soderstrom, Mary. (1999, June). Heritage and XYZ enter English market. *Quill & Quire*. 65 (6), 17.
- _____. (2002, December 10). Strong Canadian presence at Guadalajara fair. "Inside Report." *Quill & Quire*, 68 (12), p. 6.on.
- Stoughton, Mary. (1996). *Substance & style: Instruction and practice in copyediting*. Alexandria, VA: EEI Press.
- Szanto, George. (1998). *Inside the statues of saints: Mexican writers on culture and corruption, politics, and daily life*. Montréal: Vehicule Press.
- _____. (2001). *The Condesa of M*. Toronto: Cormorant Books.
- _____. (2002). Truth and storytelling. *Textual Studies in Canada*. Kamloops, BC: University College of the Cariboo, 16, pp. 77-94.
- _____. (2004). *The Underside of Stones*. Montréal: XYZ Publishing.
- _____. (2004). *Second Sight*. Montréal: XYZ Publishing.
- _____. (2005). *The Condesa of M*. Montréal: XYZ Publishing.
- _____. *The Condesa of M*. Four drafts: Draft 1, July 26, 2004; Draft 2, August 24, 2004; Draft 3, November 4, 2004; Draft 4, December 9, 2004.
- Weiler, Derek. (2003, December 1). Writing from away. *Quill & Quire*, 69 (12), p. 10.
- Wright, Robert. (2001). *Hip and trivial: Youth culture, book publishing, and the greying of Canadian nationalism*. Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: *SECOND SIGHT* PRESS RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

*XYZ Publishing is pleased to announce the publication of
Second Sight by George Szanto*

With *Second Sight*, the final volume in his **The Conquests of Mexico** trilogy, George Szanto returns to the fictional Mexican village of Michoácuaro, which he first introduced to readers in *The Underside of Stones*. In this enchanting and mysterious village, Jorge, a university criminologist from Montreal, first sought refuge after the death of his beloved wife. Five years later, Jorge returns to Michoácuaro at the invitation of his friend Pepe Legarto who has recently been elected mayor.

Jorge hopes to re-capture some of the magic of his previous visit, but upon arriving in Michoácuaro for the inaugural fiesta, he finds many things have changed and a wave of fear and paranoia has permeated the village. Instead of a joyous reunion with Pepe, he finds that his friend has disappeared. Kidnapped or dead, no one knows for sure, but they all have their theories: snatched up by political rivals? Or perhaps enjoying a secret rendezvous with a beautiful señorita.

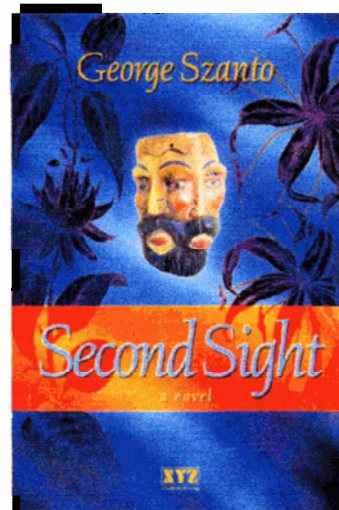
Ignoring his better instincts which tell him not to get involved in the intrigues and conspiracies of this deeply foreign culture, Jorge begins a search for Pepe. Jorge confronts dangers he doesn't understand, antagonizes forces that want to get rid of him, and discovers a criminal underside to the country that till now had only captivated him.

The material in *Second Sight* was, for years, very dangerous to discuss openly in Mexico, and even more dangerous to confront. Only recently has the new federal government there begun to open the National Archives to make public a wealth of documents detailing the fates of political dissidents over the last half century. At last, *Second Sight* can be published without bringing possible harm to others.

The stories of **The Conquests of Mexico** trace some of the important patterns in a newly emerging Mexico between the years of 1985 and 1994, a Mexico shaking itself free from the forces that controlled the nation for much of the twentieth century.

George Szanto has published a dozen books – novels, stories, plays, and essays. *Second Sight* is his third novel set in the fictional Mexican village of Michoácuaro. XYZ will make the previous two books available in trade paperback editions, beginning in September 2004 with *The Underside of Stones* and followed by *The Condesa of M.* in April 2005.

Born in Derry, Northern Ireland, Szanto has a PhD in Comparative Literature from Harvard. He taught and lectured for 33 years, most recently at McGill University, and was named a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada in 1988. He currently resides on Gabriola Island, BC.



–30–

George Szanto is available for interviews this fall in Toronto and Vancouver.

For more information, or to arrange an interview please contact:

Sherry Naylor at Meisner Publicity Tel: (416) 368-8253; E-mail: meisnerpublicity@sympatico.ca in Toronto
or

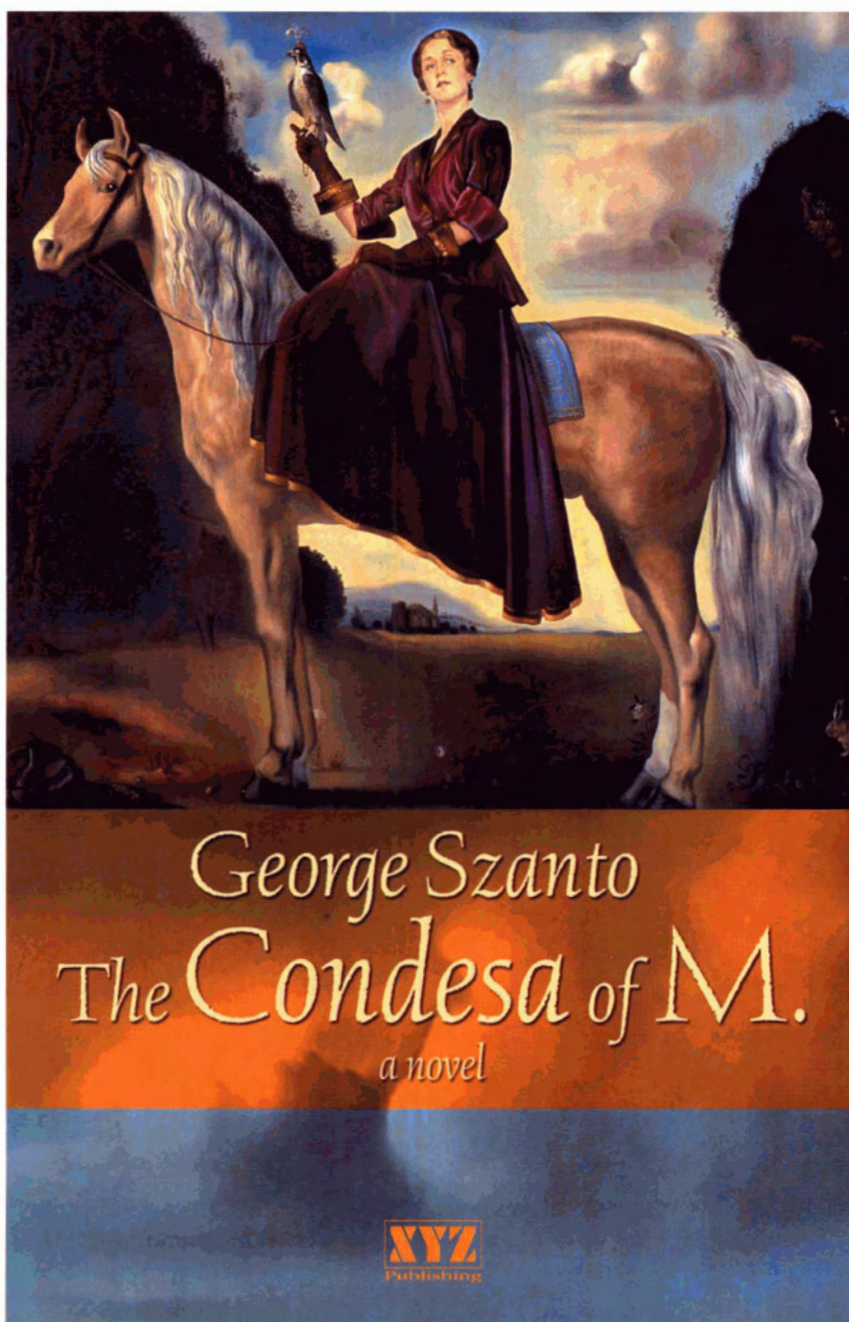
Cythia Cecil at XYZ Publishing Tel. (250) 248-3857; E-mail cjcecil@shaw.ca in Vancouver

Second Sight by George Szanto
ISBN 1-894852-11-7 * 5 ½" x 8 ½" • 328 pages * Trade Paper \$24.95
Sales and distribution by Fitzhenry & Whiteside



XYZ Publishing, 1781 Saint Hubert St., Montreal, QC H2L 3Z1
Phone: (514) 525-2170 Fax: (514) 525-7137 E-mail: info@xyzedit.qc.ca

Reproduced by permission

APPENDIX B: COVER DESIGN FOR *THE CONDESA OF M.*

Reproduced by permission

Fear and loathing down Mexico way

Extreme tension and comic absurdity in the conclusion of George Szanto's trilogy

BY BILL KING

FICTION | Ask most Canadians what they think of when they hear the word "Mexico" and you're more likely to hear about beaches and tequila than political assassinations and "disappearances." But while it's not widely known here, the place many of us go to get away has a long history of state-sponsored violence against its own people.

The human-rights violations were particularly intense, and particularly well hidden, when Mexico was run by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), whose seven-decade hold on power ended not that long ago.

They were so well hidden that, until the media-savvy Zapatistas burst on to the scene in the mid-1990s and focused world awareness on the brutality behind the PRI's rule, only two instances of state violence had made international headlines.

The first was 1968's infamous Tlatelolco massacre, when the army and the police, on orders from the PRI, gunned down hundreds of students who were demanding democracy.

The second occurred 20 years later when the PRI stole the presidential election from its first real electoral opposition.

In the years that followed, hundreds of pro-democracy activists who refused to accept the results were murdered or "disappeared" by state security forces.

It's in the tumultuous years after the 1988 fraud that Gabriola Island writer George Szanto has set his new novel, *Second Sight*. Szanto, who has lived in and written extensively about Mexico, is clearly no stranger to that country's famously

enigmatic people and culture. *Second Sight* concludes his trilogy of historical novels called *The Conquests of Mexico*. The first two explored the religious, mystical and occult beliefs that have such deep roots in Mexican society.

The dark arts to which he turns his attention in *Second Sight* are the no less nefarious ones of political corruption and violence. Having voted out the local PRI strongman in their mayoral election, the people of the fictional town of Michoacuaro find, to their horror, that by the time the ballot boxes reach the state capital, the PRI has "won" the election. Even worse, their mayor-elect, agro-entrepreneur and occasional ladies' man Pepe Legarto, soon vanishes from sight.

What could have happened to him? The task of finding out is thrust into the unlikely lap of our narrator, George — or "Jorge," as he's known in Mexico. He's an elderly professor from Montreal who is invited back to Michoacuaro to attend his old friend's inauguration.

Jorge finds it hard to believe that Pepe has been elected mayor but agrees to fly down for the occasion. After all, who could resist spending the winter in Mexico?

As soon as he realizes that Pepe is missing, though, all thoughts of a vacation disappear as the hunt for answers begins.

You don't have to read very far into the intense — and at times darkly funny — search for Pepe to realize that Szanto has not written a "political" novel, in the narrow sense. What he has done is create a wonderfully rich and detailed story that alternates between extreme tension and sheer comic absurdity.

In doing so, he succeeds in evoking that addictive mix of the astonishing and the commonplace that has always made Mexico so fascinating.

Politically minded readers may be appalled that a North American author would use elements of levity in a novel about a political dis-



MARK VAN MANEN/VANCOUVER SUN FILES

George Szanto: Too familiar with Mexico to let political correctness determine the story.

appearance in Mexico. A wickedly cheeky plot twist that reveals Pepe's fate won't do much to assuage those who are so inclined.

The rest of us can be grateful that Szanto is simply too good a novelist, and too familiar with Mexico, to let political correctness determine the story. I believe that his approach is ultimately the more faithful one, both to Szanto's craft and to Mexico.


Bill King was born in Colombia and maintains a strong interest in Latin American history and politics.



SECOND SIGHT

BY GEORGE SZANTO
XYZ Publishing, 328 pages
(\$24.95)

APPENDIX D: LPG JOY READ PROJECT ADS



Take a Joy Read Canada

Your weekly guide to literary happenings



January 14
Talk of the Town at UBC
 Featuring **Pauline Holdstock, *Mortal Distractions***
THISTLEDOWN PRESS
 The University of British Columbia, Vancouver
 Robson Square, 800 Robson Street
 7:30 p.m. www.thistledown.sk.ca





January 14
Penumbra Press 25th Anniversary in Ottawa
 Featuring **Tom Henighan, *Coming of Age in Arabia***
PENUMBRA PRESS
 Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa
 395 Wellington Street
 7:00 p.m. www.penumbrapress.com

Be sure to check out all the January/February Joy Read titles

<p><i>Going to New Orleans</i>, by Charles Tidler <i>Robinson's Crossing</i>, by Jan Zwicky <i>Short Haul Engine</i>, by Karen Solie <i>Riffs</i>, by Dennis Lee <i>Safety of War</i>, by Rob Benvie <i>Self-Titled</i>, by Geoffrey Brown <i>The Worthwhile Flux</i>, by Corey Frost <i>Rue du Regard</i>, by Todd Swift <i>A Love Supreme</i>, by Kent Nussey <i>Truth or Death</i>, by Thierry Hentsch <i>Shuswap Journey</i>, by Harold Eustache <i>Mortal Distractions</i>, by Pauline Holdstock <i>The Story of Blue Eye</i>, by Tyler Trafford <i>Rosa's District 6</i>, by Rozena Maert <i>Rainsongs of Kotli</i>, by Tariq Malik <i>Venous Hum</i>, by Suzette Mayr <i>Kilker</i>, by John Gould <i>Making Light of Tragedy</i>, by Jessica Grant <i>Summat Else</i>, by Royston Tester <i>The Man Who Killed Houdini</i>, by Don Bell</p>	<p><i>Second Sight</i>, by George Szanto <i>The Long Slide</i>, by James Grainger <i>Fruit</i>, by Brian Francis <i>Enough Already!</i>, by Bruce O'Hara <i>Cherry Bites</i>, by Alison Preston <i>Aldershot 1945</i>, by Bruce Allen Powe <i>The Fleeting Years</i>, by Laura Pratt <i>Any Day Now</i>, by Denise Roig <i>Falling for Snow</i>, by Jamie Bastedo <i>Strangers in the Mirror</i>, edited by Sanjay Taireja <i>The Alchemist's Daughter</i>, by Eileen Kernaghan <i>Dancing with the Cranes</i>, by Jeannette Armstrong <i>Songs for Relinquishing the Earth</i>, by Jan Zwicky <i>Dead Men of the Fifties</i>, by Pier Giorgio Di Cicco <i>Coming of Age in Arabia</i>, by Tom Henighan <i>Looking in the Distance</i>, by Richard Holloway <i>Red Silk</i>, edited by Rishma Dunlop & Priscila Uppal <i>The Mansion & Other Stories</i>, by Alvaro Mutis <i>West Wind, North Chatter</i>, by Deanna Kent-McDonald <i>You, Kwazniewski, You Piss Me Off</i>, by John Lavery</p>
--	--

All titles available in quality bookstores across Canada

For more information on these titles and events, please visit www.lpg.ca/joyread

Reproduced by permission

Take a *Joy Read* Canada
Your weekly guide to literary happenings

Participate at Bacchus Books, People's Co-Op Books, Bolen Books, Book Warehouse (Broadway), Book Warehouse (4th Avenue), Book Warehouse (Davie Street), and Book Warehouse (Granville)

January 14
Talk of the Town at UBC
 Featuring **Pauline Holdstock, *Mortal Distractions***
 THISTLEDOWN PRESS
 The University of British Columbia, Vancouver
 Robson Square, 800 Robson Street
 7:30 p.m. www.thistledown.sk.ca

January 19
RAW Exchange Reading Series: Truth and Storytelling
 Featuring **George Szanto, *Second Sight***
 XYZ PUBLISHING
Harold Eustache, *Shuswap Journey*
 THEYTUS BOOKS
 Vancouver Public Library (Central Branch)
 350 W. Georgia Street www.theytusbooks.ca
 7:30 p.m. www.xyzedit.qc.ca

And be sure to check out these other great *Joy Read* titles

***Summat Else, stories* by Royston Tester**
 THE PORCUPINE'S QUILL

***Enough Already!*, by Bruce O'Hara**
 NEW STAR BOOKS

***Haul Engine, poetry* by Karen Solie**
 BRICK BOOKS

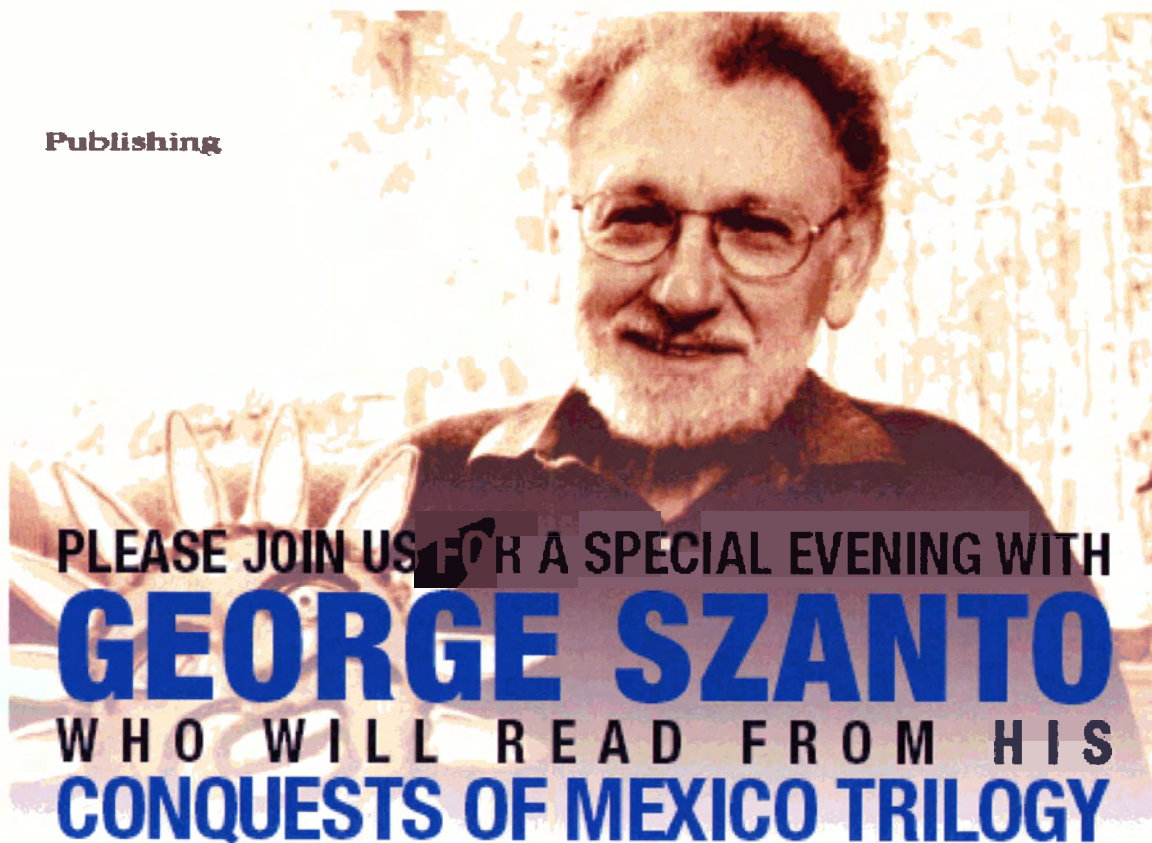
***Falling for Snow*, by Jamie Bastedo**
 RED DEER PRESS

For more information on these titles and events, please visit www.lpg.ca/joyread

Reproduced by permission

APPENDIX E: BOLEN BOOKS POSTER

Publishing

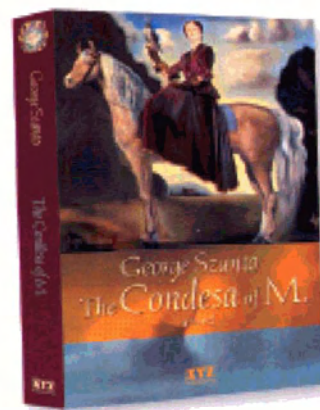
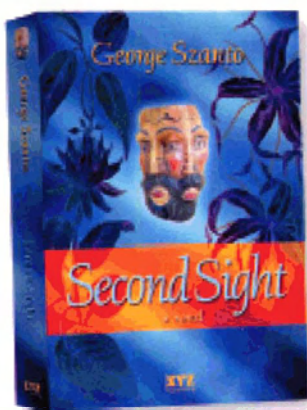
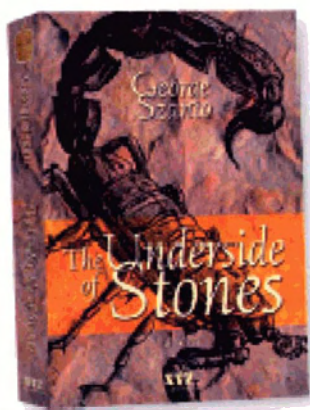


BOLEN BOOKS

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19TH AT 7 PM

111-1644 HILLSIDE AVE., VICTORIA

TEL.: (250) 595-4232



Reproduced by permission